

















*THIS SINGING WORLD*

## BOOKS BY LOUIS UNTERMEYER

### *Poetry*

FOOD AND DRINK  
BURNING BUSH  
ROAST LEVIATHAN  
CHALLENGE  
THE NEW ADAM  
THESE TIMES

### *Parodies*

INCLUDING HORACE  
— AND OTHER POETS  
HEAVENS  
COLLECTED PARODIES

### *Tales*

CHIP: MY LIFE AND TIMES  
THE DONKEY OF GOD  
THE FAT OF THE CAT  
AND OTHER STORIES  
MOSES

### *Travel*

BLUE RHINE-BLACK FOREST

### *Essays*

AMERICAN POETRY SINCE 1900  
THE FORMS OF POETRY

### *Critical Collections*

THE BOOK OF LIVING VERSE  
AMERICAN POETRY FROM THE  
BEGINNING TO WHITMAN  
MODERN AMERICAN POETRY  
MODERN BRITISH POETRY  
THIS SINGING WORLD  
YESTERDAY AND TODAY  
POEMS OF HEINRICH HEINE

# *THIS SINGING WORLD*

AN ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN POETRY  
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

*Collected and Edited by*  
LOUIS UNTERMAYER

*Illustrations by*  
FLORENCE WYMAN IVINS



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*To*  
THE CHILDREN'S ROOM  
OF  
THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY  
AND ESPECIALLY  
ANNIE CARROLL MOORE  
LEONORE ST. JOHN POWER  
FRANCES CLARKE





## INTRODUCTION

### TO THE READER HIMSELF (OR HERSELF)

You won't like all of these poems. Even though I'm not sure just who you are, you couldn't possibly care for every single one of them. Nobody could. There are, in this remarkable world, as many different tastes as there are flavors. And that is why I have included not only so many poems but so many kinds of poems. Perhaps you're especially fond of music. Then you will read many of these verses for the sheer sound of them: for the throb and beat of the rhymes, for the little, tinkling feet that tap their toes to an even measure, for the tunes that shape themselves as the words sing out with even more melody than meaning. Perhaps — am I right? — you are something of a dreamer. You can see castles in the clouds, pictures in the dying fire; you know that the wayside fern often conceals a frightened fairy and that every twilight has its own pet phantom. You will find them all here — friendly unicorns, babies with fairy-laughter, dinkey-birds in amfalula trees, enchanted shirts and singing mermaids — all in a world of phantasy whose colors are lovelier and livelier than those the eye can see. Perhaps you are a boy who, with one eye on your homework and the other on the batting averages, has always considered poetry a sort of childish sugar-candy — “a sentimental lollipop” (I've heard you say it!) “for silly girls.” Now, wait a moment. Read the ballads of Rudyard Kipling (You have? Well, read them again!), listen to the rousing voices in the

## INTRODUCTION

Heroic Heart, spend a few minutes with the writers who will help you discover the everyday magic in Common Things. Perhaps, however, you don't like to be talked to quite so seriously — at least, not all the time. Well, nobody can prevent you turning to the hop-skip-and-a-leap of the Laughing Legends, or the galloping nonsense in Rhyme without Reason. Perhaps — terrible thought! — you don't like to read at all, but prefer romping and swinging along in the pure joy of out-of-doors. Don't think you can escape so easily! See if you don't feel the wind on your forehead and the blood racing in your veins when you hear the marches in the section called Open Roads and the breezy trumpets blowing out of the Breath of the Earth.

But whatever else you may look for (and, I hope, find), I think you will take pleasure not only in the sounds and the stories, but in the words themselves. The men and women who wrote the pieces in this book — in fact, all poets who ever lived — have enjoyed finding words to carry their feelings to others, and people have always enjoyed following the words. To-day there seem to be more people who wish to shape their thoughts into many different arrangements of words, and more people who share their enjoyment. Most of the poems in this book were written by living poets — and so it is *this* singing world — your world as well as theirs — that is between these covers. Sometimes I think the poems are as much alive as the persons who wrote them — just as *Oliver Twist* and *Robinson Crusoe* and *Hamlet* and *D'Artagnan* and *Danny Deever* and *Gulliver* are as real as any man we know. Thomas Carlyle once said that every fine poem was at bottom, a kind of biography, the life of a man — “and,” he went on, “it may also be said, there is no life

## INTRODUCTION

of man but is a heroic poem of some sort, rhymed or unrhymed."

And that, I suppose, is the Moral of this Introduction. (Every introduction, you know, must have one!) If we want to make it simpler, all these sentences could be boiled down to a four-word problem in arithmetic:

$$\textit{Poetry} + \textit{People} = \textit{Education} + \textit{Enjoyment}$$

At any rate, they are four good words. They seem, like things equal to the same thing, equal to each other. They are, everywhere, and especially in this book, closely related. Let them stand together.

L. U.

NEW YORK CITY



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	vii
A FOREWORD . . . . . <i>Hilaire Belloc</i> . . . . .	xxi

## SONGS OF AWAKENING

"The Year's at the Spring" . . . . . <i>Robert Browning</i> . . . . .	3
Dawn and Dark . . . . . <i>Norman Gale</i> . . . . .	3
Ballade of Spring . . . . . <i>W. E. Henley</i> . . . . .	3
Spring Song . . . . . <i>Hilda Conkling</i> . . . . .	5
April . . . . . <i>Sara Teasdale</i> . . . . .	6
April Winds . . . . . <i>Michael Lewis</i> . . . . .	6
Song . . . . . <i>William Watson</i> . . . . .	9
Sunrise . . . . . <i>Lizette Woodworth Reese</i> . . . . .	9
The Wakers . . . . . <i>John Freeman</i> . . . . .	10
Who Calls? . . . . . <i>Frances Clarke</i> . . . . .	11

## BREATH OF THE EARTH

Prelude . . . . . <i>J. M. Synge</i> . . . . .	15
God's World . . . . . <i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i> . . . . .	15
Nature's Friend . . . . . <i>W. H. Davies</i> . . . . .	16
Who Has Seen the Wind? . . . . . <i>Christina Georgiana Rossetti</i> . . . . .	17
Boats Sail on the Rivers . . . . . <i>Christina Georgiana Rossetti</i> . . . . .	17
Heat . . . . . "H. D." . . . . .	17
Storm . . . . . "H. D." . . . . .	18
The Storm . . . . . <i>Emily Dickinson</i> . . . . .	19
Velvet Shoes . . . . . <i>Elinor Wylie</i> . . . . .	19
First Frost . . . . . <i>Edwin Curran</i> . . . . .	20
Song of Summer . . . . . <i>Paul Laurence Dunbar</i> . . . . .	23
Summer Evening . . . . . <i>Walter de la Mare</i> . . . . .	24
Night Stuff . . . . . <i>Carl Sandburg</i> . . . . .	25
Harvest Sunset . . . . . <i>Carl Sandburg</i> . . . . .	25
Evening Waterfall . . . . . <i>Carl Sandburg</i> . . . . .	26
Fog . . . . . <i>Carl Sandburg</i> . . . . .	26
Glimpse in Autumn . . . . . <i>Jean Starr Untermeyer</i> . . . . .	27
Autumn . . . . . <i>Edwin Curran</i> . . . . .	27
Autumn . . . . . <i>Emily Dickinson</i> . . . . .	28
Homecoming . . . . . <i>Léonie Adams</i> . . . . .	28
The Garden Year . . . . . <i>Sara Coleridge</i> . . . . .	29
"I am He That Walks" . . . . . <i>Walt Whitman</i> . . . . .	30

# CONTENTS

PAGE

## SURGE OF THE SEA

The Sea Gypsy . . . . .	<i>Richard Hovey</i> . . . . .	33
A Wanderer's Song . . . . .	<i>John Masefield</i> . . . . .	33
The Sea . . . . .	<i>A. C. Swinburne</i> . . . . .	34
From "Swimmers" . . . . .	<i>Louis Untermeyer</i> . . . . .	35
The Noise of Waters . . . . .	<i>James Joyce</i> . . . . .	36
Old Ships . . . . .	<i>David Morton</i> . . . . .	36
Ballade of a Ship . . . . .	<i>Edwin Arlington Robinson</i> . . . . .	37
Oread . . . . .	" <i>H. D.</i> " . . . . .	38
Sea Call . . . . .	<i>Margaret Widdemer</i> . . . . .	38
High-Tide . . . . .	<i>Jean Starr Untermeyer</i> . . . . .	39

## OPEN ROADS

The Joys of the Road . . . . .	<i>Bliss Carman</i> . . . . .	43
The Long Road . . . . .	<i>A. E. Housman</i> . . . . .	45
The Song of the Ungirt Runners . . . . .	<i>Charles Hamilton Sorley</i> . . . . .	46
The West Wind . . . . .	<i>John Masefield</i> . . . . .	49
To the Winter Wind . . . . .	<i>John Gould Fletcher</i> . . . . .	50
Wander-Thirst . . . . .	<i>Gerald Gould</i> . . . . .	51
I Want to Go Wandering . . . . .	<i>Vachel Lindsay</i> . . . . .	51
Do You Fear the Wind? . . . . .	<i>Hamlin Garland</i> . . . . .	53
"Over the Hills and Far Away" . . . . .	<i>W. E. Henley</i> . . . . .	53
"I Hear the Woodlands Call- ing" . . . . .	<i>Madison Cawein</i> . . . . .	54
Afternoon on a Hill . . . . .	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i> . . . . .	55
The Road to Anywhere . . . . .	<i>Bert Leston Taylor</i> . . . . .	56
The Road . . . . .	<i>John Gould Fletcher</i> . . . . .	57

## COMMON THINGS

The Pasture . . . . .	<i>Robert Frost</i> . . . . .	61
Simplicity . . . . .	<i>Emily Dickinson</i> . . . . .	61
Pedigree . . . . .	<i>Emily Dickinson</i> . . . . .	62
Loveliest of Trees . . . . .	<i>A. E. Housman</i> . . . . .	62
The First Dandelion . . . . .	<i>Walt Whitman</i> . . . . .	62
Dandelion . . . . .	<i>Hilda Conkling</i> . . . . .	63
Tulip . . . . .	<i>Humbert Wolfe</i> . . . . .	63
Daisies . . . . .	<i>Frank Dempster Sherman</i> . . . . .	64
Daisies . . . . .	<i>Bliss Carman</i> . . . . .	64
The Hungry Heart . . . . .	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i> . . . . .	65
To a Snowflake . . . . .	<i>Francis Thompson</i> . . . . .	65
Song for a Little House . . . . .	<i>Christopher Morley</i> . . . . .	66
Prayer for This House . . . . .	<i>Louis Untermeyer</i> . . . . .	67

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
Bells in the Country . . . . .	Robert Nathan . . . . . 67
Escape at Bedtime . . . . .	Robert Louis Stevenson . . . 68
The Unrealized Ideal . . . . .	Frederick Locker Lampson . . 68
Moon Song . . . . .	Claude McKay . . . . . 69
The Street-Musician . . . . .	Anonymous . . . . . 70
A Wasted Day . . . . .	Frances Cornford . . . . . 70
Saturday Night . . . . .	James Oppenheim . . . . . 71
Sunday Evening in the Common	John Hall Wheelock . . . . . 73
The Commonplace . . . . .	Walt Whitman . . . . . 73

## PLACES

The Lake Isle of Innisfree . . .	William Butler Yeats . . . . 77
The Waves of Breffny . . . . .	Eva Gore-Booth . . . . . 77
Tewkesbury Road . . . . .	John Masefield . . . . . 78
A Street Scene . . . . .	Lizette Woodworth Reese . . . 79
The House on the Hill . . . . .	Edwin Arlington Robinson . . 79
Interior . . . . .	Padraic Colum . . . . . 80
Where the Wood-Thrush Calls	Jessie Wallace Hughan . . . . 83
The Hayloft . . . . .	Robert Louis Stevenson . . . . 84
Keepsake Mill . . . . .	Robert Louis Stevenson . . . . 85
Full Moon . . . . .	Sara Teasdale . . . . . 86
Stopping by Woods on a	
Snowy Evening . . . . .	Robert Frost . . . . . 86
A Brook in the City . . . . .	Robert Frost . . . . . 87

## CHILDREN

A Baby's Feet . . . . .	A. C. Swinburne . . . . . 91
A Baby's Eyes . . . . .	A. C. Swinburne . . . . . 91
"One, Two, Three!" . . . . .	Henry Cuyler Bunner . . . . . 92
The Desire . . . . .	Katherine Tynan . . . . . 93
Bible Stories . . . . .	Lizette Woodworth Reese . . . 94
The Children's Hour . . . . .	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow . 95
A Child's Prayer . . . . .	Francis Thompson . . . . . 96
A Child Upon the Stair . . . . .	Carolyn Hall . . . . . 98
Moon-Children . . . . .	Michael Lewis . . . . . 99
The Daughter at Evening . . . .	Robert Nathan . . . . . 99
The Young Mystic . . . . .	Louis Untermeyer . . . . . 100
The Land of Story-Books . . . .	Robert Louis Stevenson . . . . 100
Mumps . . . . .	Elizabeth Madox Roberts . . . 101
A Recollection . . . . .	Frances Cornford . . . . . 102
What is the Grass? . . . . .	Walt Whitman . . . . . 102
Baby Toes . . . . .	Carl Sandburg . . . . . 103
Helga . . . . .	Carl Sandburg . . . . . 103



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
For Arvia . . . . .	<i>Edwin Arlington Robinson</i> 104
Tired Tim . . . . .	<i>Walter de la Mare</i> . . . . 104
Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore	<i>William Brighty Rand</i> . . . 105
Minnie, Mattie and May . . .	<i>Christina Georgiana Rossetti</i> 106
Leetla Giuseppina . . . . .	<i>T. A. Daly</i> . . . . . 107
To Dick, On His Sixth Birthday	<i>Sara Teasdale</i> . . . . . 108
Ten Years Old . . . . .	<i>Louis Untermeyer</i> . . . . 109

## OTHER PEOPLE

Seumas Beg . . . . .	<i>James Stephens</i> . . . . . 115
Miss T . . . . .	<i>Walter de la Mare</i> . . . . 115
Mr. Wells . . . . .	<i>Elizabeth Madox Roberts</i> . 116
Bill Peters . . . . .	<i>American Cowboy Ballad</i> . 116
Father William . . . . .	<i>Lewis Carroll</i> . . . . . 118
Mother . . . . .	<i>Theresa Helburn</i> . . . . . 120
The Watcher . . . . .	<i>Margaret Widdemer</i> . . . . 120
The Shepherdess . . . . .	<i>Alice Meynell</i> . . . . . 121
The Old Lady . . . . .	<i>Humbert Wolfe</i> . . . . . 121
The Last Leaf . . . . .	<i>Oliver Wendell Holmes</i> . . 122
The Runner . . . . .	<i>Walt Whitman</i> . . . . . 124
Portrait by a Neighbor . . . .	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i> . . 124
In Praise of Johnny Appleseed	<i>Vachel Lindsay</i> . . . . . 125

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

The Runaway . . . . .	<i>Robert Frost</i> . . . . . 137
The Rabbit . . . . .	<i>Elizabeth Madox Roberts</i> . 137
The Kerry Cow . . . . .	<i>W. M. Letts</i> . . . . . 138
Cushy Cow . . . . .	<i>Laura Benét</i> . . . . . 140
A Cow at Sullington . . . . .	<i>Charles Dalmon</i> . . . . . 140
A Caterpillar's Apology for Eat- ing a Favorite Gladiolus . . .	<i>Charles Dalmon</i> . . . . . 140
The Caterpillar . . . . .	<i>Robert Graves</i> . . . . . 141
The Mocking-Bird . . . . .	<i>Richard Hovey</i> . . . . . 142
The Blackbird . . . . .	<i>W. E. Henley</i> . . . . . 142
The Blackbird . . . . .	<i>Humbert Wolfe</i> . . . . . 143
The Kingfisher . . . . .	<i>W. H. Davies</i> . . . . . 143
Chickadee . . . . .	<i>Hilda Conkling</i> . . . . . 144
To a Sparrow . . . . .	<i>Francis Ledwidge</i> . . . . . 145
Homing Swallows . . . . .	<i>Claude McKay</i> . . . . . 145
The Wasp . . . . .	<i>William Sharp</i> . . . . . 146
Fireflies . . . . .	<i>Carolyn Hall</i> . . . . . 146
Dolphins in Blue Water . . . .	<i>Amy Lowell</i> . . . . . 149
Cat's Meat . . . . .	<i>Harold Monro</i> . . . . . 150

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Ambitious Mouse . . . . .	John Farrar . . . . . 151
At Night . . . . .	Frances Cornford . . . . . 151
Da Pup Een Da Snow . . . . .	T. A. Daly . . . . . 152
The Grasshopper . . . . .	Vachel Lindsay . . . . . 154
Chanticleer . . . . .	Katherine Tynan . . . . . 154
Red Rooster . . . . .	Hilda Conkling . . . . . 155
The Hens . . . . .	Elizabeth Madox Roberts . . 156

## FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS

The Fairies. . . . .	William Allingham . . . . . 161
The Fairies. . . . .	Rose Fyleman . . . . . 163
Fairy-Music . . . . .	Rose Fyleman . . . . . 164
I'd Love to be a Fairy's Child	Robert Graves . . . . . 164
In Fairyland . . . . .	Joyce Kilmer . . . . . 165
Suppose . . . . .	Walter de la Mare . . . . . 165
The Shadow People . . . . .	Francis Ledwidge . . . . . 167
The Satyrs and the Moon . . .	Herbert S. Gorman . . . . . 168
How to Catch Unicorns . . . .	William Rose Benét . . . . . 171
The Elf and the Dormouse . . .	Oliver Herford . . . . . 172
Little Orphant Annie . . . . .	James Whitcomb Riley . . . . 173
The Mermaid . . . . .	Alfred Tennyson . . . . . 175
Adventure . . . . .	Laura Benét . . . . . 177

## WORDS AND MUSIC

Ode . . . . .	Arthur O'Shaughnessy . . . 181
To Helen . . . . .	Edgar Allan Poe . . . . . 182
A Birthday . . . . .	Christina Georgiana Rossetti 182
The Cherry-Blossom Wand . . .	Anna Wickham . . . . . 185
Song . . . . .	William Butler Yeats . . . . 186
Song . . . . .	Rupert Brooke . . . . . 186
Portrait of a Girl . . . . .	Conrad Aiken . . . . . 187
The Night Will Never Stay. . .	Eleanor Farjeon . . . . . 188
How Many Times . . . . .	Thomas Lovell Beddoes . . . 189
Blow, Bugle, Blow . . . . .	Alfred Tennyson . . . . . 189
For Them All . . . . .	John Hall Wheelock . . . . . 190
Nirvana . . . . .	John Hall Wheelock . . . . . 191
The Words . . . . .	Opal Whitely . . . . . 191
Light . . . . .	F. W. Bourdillon . . . . . 193
At the Symphony . . . . .	Robert Nathan . . . . . 193
The Singer . . . . .	Anna Wickham . . . . . 194
Four Moon Poems . . . . .	Vachel Lindsay . . . . . 197
A Hillside Thaw . . . . .	Robert Frost . . . . . 199

# CONTENTS

## WHIMS AND PHANTASIES

PAGE

Apparitions . . . . .	<i>Robert Browning</i> . . . . .	200
Israfel . . . . .	<i>Edgar Allan Poe</i> . . . . .	200
Fantasy . . . . .	<i>Louis Untermeyer</i> . . . . .	202
Three Pictures . . . . .	<i>Charles Dalmon</i> . . . . .	203
Theology . . . . .	<i>Joyce Kilmer</i> . . . . .	204
Apes and Ivory . . . . .	<i>Alfred Noyes</i> . . . . .	204
Chimes . . . . .	<i>Alice Meynell</i> . . . . .	206
A Tree at Dusk . . . . .	<i>Winifred Welles</i> . . . . .	206
Variations on an Old Nursery Rhyme . . . . .	<i>Edith Sitwell</i> . . . . .	207
Whim . . . . .	<i>Conrad Aiken</i> . . . . .	207
Bloom . . . . .	<i>Alfred Kreymborg</i> . . . . .	208
Capriccio . . . . .	<i>Babette Deutsch</i> . . . . .	208
A Phantasy of Heaven . . . . .	<i>Harry Kemp</i> . . . . .	209
Dick Said: . . . . .	<i>Louis Untermeyer</i> . . . . .	210
Sea Shell . . . . .	<i>Amy Lowell</i> . . . . .	211
A Comparison . . . . .	<i>John Farrar</i> . . . . .	211
Ballade of Blue China . . . . .	<i>Andrew Lang</i> . . . . .	212
Solitude . . . . .	<i>Harold Monro</i> . . . . .	213
The Dinky-Bird . . . . .	<i>Eugene Field</i> . . . . .	214
I Wonder What it Feels Like to be Drowned . . . . .	<i>Robert Graves</i> . . . . .	216

## TALES AND BALLADS

Little Breeches . . . . .	<i>John Hay</i> . . . . .	219
Danny Deever . . . . .	<i>Rudyard Kipling</i> . . . . .	221
Drake's Drum . . . . .	<i>Henry Newbolt</i> . . . . .	222
The Horse Thief . . . . .	<i>William Rose Benét</i> . . . . .	223
A Legend of Cherries . . . . .	<i>Charles Dalmon</i> . . . . .	228
From the Day-Book of a For- gotten Prince . . . . .	<i>Jean Starr Untermeyer</i> . . . . .	229
The Ballad of East and West. . . . .	<i>Rudyard Kipling</i> . . . . .	231
The Ballad of John Silver . . . . .	<i>John Masefield</i> . . . . .	237
The Blessed Damozel . . . . .	<i>Dante Gabriel Rossetti</i> . . . . .	238
The Slave's Dream . . . . .	<i>Henry Wadsworth Longfellow</i> . . . . .	243
Willy Winkie . . . . .	<i>Daniel Henry Holmes</i> . . . . .	244
The Sands of Dee . . . . .	<i>Charles Kingsley</i> . . . . .	247
The Puritan's Ballad . . . . .	<i>Flinor Wylie</i> . . . . .	248
Whoopee Ti Yi Yo . . . . .	<i>American Cowboy Ballad</i> . . . . .	250
Father Gilligan . . . . .	<i>William Butler Yeats</i> . . . . .	251
The Highwayman . . . . .	<i>Alfred Noyes</i> . . . . .	253

# CONTENTS

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

PAGE

The Lost Shoe . . . . .	<i>Walter de la Mare</i> . . . . .	261
The Old Nurse's Song . . . . .	<i>Edith Sitwell</i> . . . . .	262
The Twins . . . . .	<i>Henry S. Leigh</i> . . . . .	263
The Little Peach . . . . .	<i>Eugene Field</i> . . . . .	264
Robinson Crusoe's Story . . . . .	<i>Charles E. Carryl</i> . . . . .	265
The Ballad of the Billycock . . . . .	<i>Anthony C. Deane</i> . . . . .	267
The Hero Cockroach . . . . .	<i>Don Marquis</i> . . . . .	268
Jim . . . . .	<i>Hilaire Belloc</i> . . . . .	272
The Yarn of the "Nancy Bell" . . . . .	<i>W. S. Gilbert</i> . . . . .	273
Ellen McJones Aberdeen . . . . .	<i>W. S. Gilbert</i> . . . . .	277
The Darned Mounseer . . . . .	<i>W. S. Gilbert</i> . . . . .	280
The Jackdaw of Rheims . . . . .	<i>Richard Harris Barham</i> . . . . .	282
The Cruel Moon . . . . .	<i>Robert Graves</i> . . . . .	286
Song Against Children . . . . .	<i>Aline Kilmer</i> . . . . .	287
Faithless Nelly Gray . . . . .	<i>Thomas Hood</i> . . . . .	287
The Milk Jug . . . . .	<i>Oliver Herford</i> . . . . .	290
De Appile Tree . . . . .	<i>Joel Chandler Harris</i> . . . . .	291
Lilliput Levee . . . . .	<i>William Brighty Rand</i> . . . . .	293

## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

The Enchanted Shirt . . . . .	<i>John Hay</i> . . . . .	301
The Cap That Fits . . . . .	<i>Austin Dobson</i> . . . . .	304
The Blind Men and the Elephant . . . . .	<i>John Godfrey Saxe</i> . . . . .	308
The Vainglorious Oak and the Modest Bulrush . . . . .	<i>Guy Wetmore Carryl</i> . . . . .	310
The Embarrassing Episode of Little Miss Muffet . . . . .	<i>Guy Wetmore Carryl</i> . . . . .	312
Henry King . . . . .	<i>Hilaire Belloc</i> . . . . .	313
Leetla Giorgio Washeenton . . . . .	<i>T. A. Daly</i> . . . . .	314
How Brer Tarrypin Learned to Fly . . . . .	<i>Joel Chandler Harris</i> . . . . .	316
Fable . . . . .	<i>Ralph Waldo Emerson</i> . . . . .	319
Idealists . . . . .	<i>Alfred Kreymborg</i> . . . . .	320
The Tree . . . . .	<i>Alfred Kreymborg</i> . . . . .	320
Voices . . . . .	<i>Witter Bynner</i> . . . . .	321

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

Topsy-Turvy World . . . . .	<i>William Brighty Rand</i> . . . . .	325
Ballad . . . . .	<i>C. S. Calverly</i> . . . . .	326
The Owl and the Pussy-Cat . . . . .	<i>Edward Lear</i> . . . . .	329
Little Billee . . . . .	<i>William Makepeace Thackeray</i> . . . . .	330

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Snark . . . . .	Lewis Carroll . . . . . 332
The Baker's Tale . . . . .	Lewis Carroll . . . . . 333
How to Tell the Wild Animals . . . . .	Carolyn Wells . . . . . 335
The Yak . . . . .	Hilaire Belloc . . . . . 336
The Frog . . . . .	Hilaire Belloc . . . . . 337
The Lion . . . . .	Hilaire Belloc . . . . . 337
The Glad Young Chamois . . . . .	Burgess Johnson . . . . . 338
Words . . . . .	Nancy Byrd Turner . . . . . 338
Contrary Mary . . . . .	Nancy Byrd Turner . . . . . 339
A Medley . . . . .	Michael Lewis . . . . . 340
Companions . . . . .	C. S. Calverley . . . . . 341
Nonsense Rhymes . . . . .	Gelett Burgess . . . . . 343
Nonsense Limericks . . . . .	Edward Lear . . . . . 344
Three Famous Limericks . . . . .	Cosmo Monkhouse . . . . . 345
Four Tricky Limericks . . . . .	Carolyn Wells . . . . . 346

## CROONS AND LULLABIES

Wynken, Blynken and Nod . . . . .	Eugene Field . . . . . 351
Lullaby . . . . .	Paul Laurence Dunbar . . . . . 352
Sweet and Low . . . . .	Alfred Tennyson . . . . . 353
A Cradle Song . . . . .	William Butler Yeats . . . . . 354
Sleep . . . . .	William Sharp . . . . . 355
Two Taverns . . . . .	Edwin Markham . . . . . 356
Old Nurse Winter . . . . .	Jean Starr Untermeyer . . . . . 356
The Ship O'Bed . . . . .	Robert P. Tristram Coffin . . . . . 357
Young and Old . . . . .	Charles Kingsley . . . . . 359
Crossing the Bar . . . . .	Alfred Tennyson . . . . . 359
O Captain! My Captain! . . . . .	Walt Whitman . . . . . 360
Requiem . . . . .	Robert Louis Stevenson . . . . . 361
Up-Hill . . . . .	Christina Georgiana Rossetti . . . . . 362
Nod . . . . .	Walter de la Mare . . . . . 362

## STARS TO HITCH TO

In After Days . . . . .	Austin Dobson . . . . . 367
The Song of Honour . . . . .	Ralph Hodgson . . . . . 367
Fourth of July Ode . . . . .	James Russell Lowell . . . . . 373
Service . . . . .	Robert Browning . . . . . 374
The Example . . . . .	W. H. Davies . . . . . 375
Happy Wind . . . . .	W. H. Davies . . . . . 375
The Eagle and the Mole . . . . .	Elmor Wylie . . . . . 376
If — . . . . .	Rudyard Kipling . . . . . 377
Primer Lesson . . . . .	Carl Sandburg . . . . . 378
Hate . . . . .	James Stephens . . . . . 378

# CONTENTS

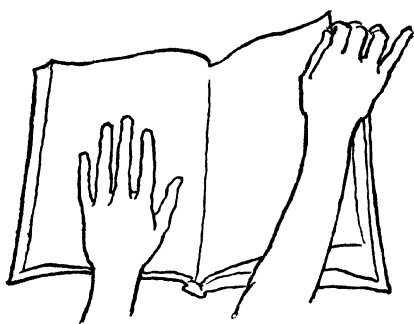
	PAGE
Tree and Sky . . . . .	Siegfried Sassoon . . . . . 379
The Enduring . . . . .	John Gould Fletcher . . . . . 379
Wishes for My Son . . . . .	Thomas MacDonagh . . . . . 380
Thunderstorms . . . . .	W. H. Davies . . . . . 382
Leisure . . . . .	W. H. Davies . . . . . 382
The Tuft of Flowers . . . . .	Robert Frost . . . . . 383
Recessional . . . . .	Rudyard Kipling . . . . . 385
Duty . . . . .	Edwin Markham . . . . . 386
A Prayer . . . . .	Edwin Markham . . . . . 386
Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun	Walt Whitman . . . . . 387

## CHRISTMAS CANDLES

Noël . . . . .	Hilaire Belloc . . . . . 391
The Oxen . . . . .	Thomas Hardy . . . . . 392
Ballad of the Epiphany . . . . .	Charles Dalmon . . . . . 395
Kriss Kringle . . . . .	Thomas Bailey Aldrich . . . . . 396
Christmas Morning . . . . .	Elizabeth Madox Roberts . . . . . 397
Christmas Island . . . . .	Katherine Lee Bates . . . . . 398
A Christmas Folk-Song . . . . .	Lizette Woodworth Reese . . . . . 401
Choir Boys on Christmas Eve	Louise Townsend Nicholl . . . . . 402
Christmas . . . . .	E. Hilton Young . . . . . 402
The House of Christmas . . . . .	G. K. Chesterton . . . . . 403

## THE HEROIC HEART

Opportunity . . . . .	Edward Rowland Sill . . . . . 407
Columbus . . . . .	Joaquin Miller . . . . . 407
Incident of the French Camp . . . . .	Robert Browning . . . . . 409
On a Poet Patriot . . . . .	Thomas MacDonagh . . . . . 410
Climb . . . . .	Winifred Welles . . . . . 413
Measure Me, Sky! . . . . .	Leonora Speyer . . . . . 414
The Trumpet . . . . .	Edward Thomas . . . . . 414
For Those Who Fail . . . . .	Joaquin Miller . . . . . 415
Invictus . . . . .	W. E. Henley . . . . . 416
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS . . . . .	417
INDEX OF AUTHORS . . . . .	421
INDEX OF TITLES . . . . .	428
INDEX OF FIRST LINES . . . . .	436



## *A FOREWORD*

Child, do not throw this book about;  
Refrain from the unholy pleasure  
Of cutting all the pictures out!  
Preserve it as your chiefest treasure.

Child, have you never heard it said  
That you are heir to all the ages?  
Why, then, your hands were never made  
To tear these beautiful thick pages!

Your little hands were made to take  
The better things and leave the worse ones.  
They also may be used to shake  
The Massive Paws of Elder Persons.

And when your prayers complete the day,  
Darling, your little tiny hands  
Were also made, I think, to pray  
For men that lose their fairylands.

*Hilaire Belloc*





*SONGS OF AWAKENING*



## SONGS OF AWAKENING

### "THE YEAR'S AT THE SPRING"

(From "*Pippa Passes*")

The year's at the spring,  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hillside's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn;  
God's in his heaven —  
All's right with the world.

*Robert Browning*

### DAWN AND DARK

God with His million cares  
Went to the left or right,  
Leaving our world; and the day  
Grew night.

Back from a sphere He came  
Over a starry lawn,  
Looked at our world; and the dark  
Grew dawn.

*Norman Gale*

### BALLADE OF SPRING

There's a noise of coming, going,  
Budding, waking, vast and still.  
Hark, the echoes are yo-hoing.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Loud and sweet from vale and hill.  
Do you hear it? With a will,  
In a grandiose lilt and swing,  
Nature's voices shout and trill. . . .  
'Tis the symphony of Spring!

Rains are singing, clouds are flowing,  
Ocean thunders, croons the rill,  
And the West his clarion's blowing.  
And the sparrow tunes his quill,  
And the thrush is fluting shrill,  
And the skylark's on the wing,  
And the merles<sup>1</sup> their hautboys<sup>2</sup> fill —  
'Tis the symphony of Spring!

Lambs are bleating, steers are lowing,  
Brisk and rhythmic clacks the mill,  
Kapellmeister<sup>3</sup> April, glowing  
And superb with glee and skill,  
Comes, his orchestra to drill  
In a music that will ring  
Till the grey world yearn and thrill.  
'Tis the symphony of Spring!

### ENVOY

Princes, though your blood be chill,  
Here's shall make you leap and fling,  
Fling and leap like Jack and Jill!  
'Tis the symphony of Spring!      *W. E. Henley*

<sup>1</sup> *Merle*: the European blackbird.

<sup>2</sup> *Hautboy*: the oboe, a wind-instrument.

<sup>3</sup> *Kapellmeister*: the leader of the orchestra.

# SONGS OF AWAKENING

## SPRING SONG<sup>1</sup>

I love daffodils.  
I love Narcissus when he bends his head.  
I can hardly keep March and Spring and Sunday and  
    daffodils  
Out of my rhyme of song.  
Do you know anything about the spring  
When it comes again?  
God knows about it while winter is lasting.  
Flowers bring him power in the spring,  
And birds bring it and children.  
He is sometimes sad and alone  
Up there in the sky trying to keep his worlds happy.  
I bring him songs  
When he is in his sadness, and weary.  
I tell him how I used to wander out  
To study stars and the moon he made,  
And flowers in the dark of the wood.  
I keep reminding him about his flowers he has forgotten,  
And that snowdrops are up.  
What can I say to make him listen?  
“God,” I say,  
“Don’t you care!  
Nobody must be sad or sorry  
In the spring-time of flowers.”

*Hilda Conkling*

*(Written at the age of six)*

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted by permission from *Poems by a Little Girl* by Hilda Conkling. Copyright, 1920, by Frederick A. Stokes Company.  
Page 6.

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## APRIL <sup>1</sup>

The roofs are shining from the rain,  
The sparrows twitter as they fly,  
And with a windy April grace  
The little clouds go by.

Yet the back-yards are bare and brown  
With only one unchanging tree —  
I could not be so sure of Spring  
Save that it sings in me.

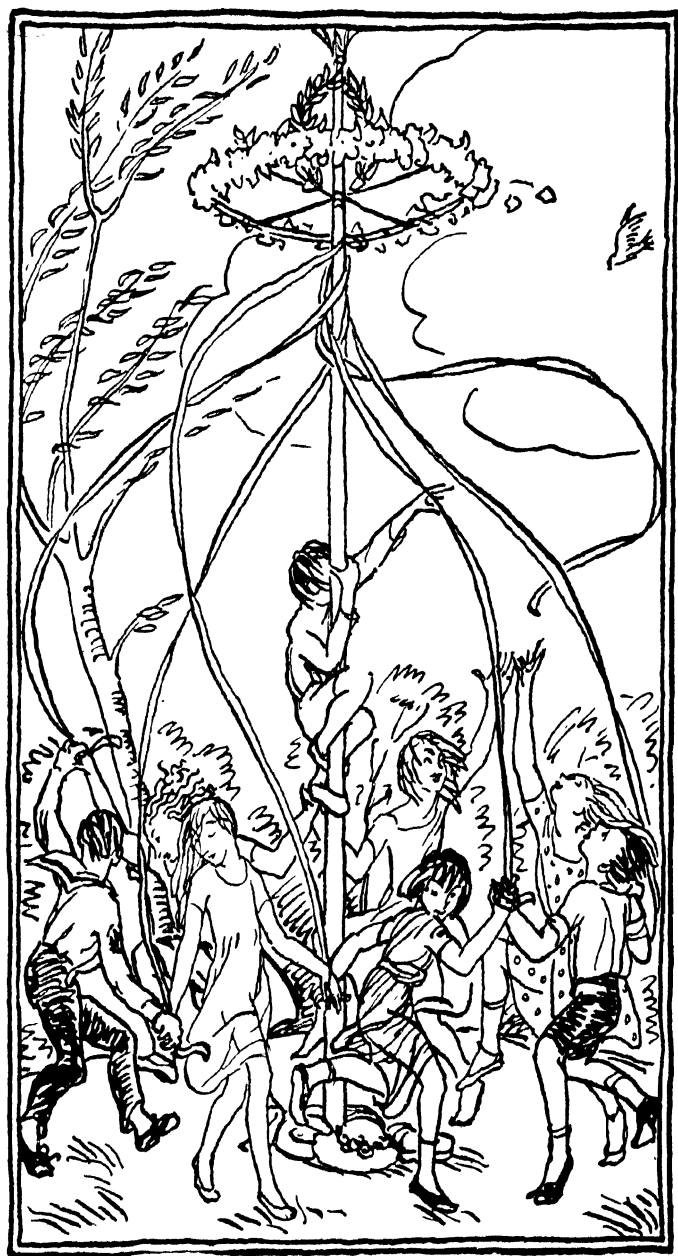
*Sara Teasdale*

## APRIL WINDS

In Spring the day is early  
And wakes a rosy world,  
Where all the twigs are pearly  
And every bud's uncurled.  
The birds are up and singing  
Before they can be seen, —  
*And April winds are winging  
Their way to make earth green.*

In Spring the sun grows pleasant,  
To prove that he is fond,  
He scatters for a present  
Gold pieces in each pond.  
He sets the bell-flowers ringing  
With perfumed melodies, —  
*And April winds run swinging  
Among the startled trees.*

<sup>1</sup> From *Rivers to the Sea* by Sara Teasdale. Copyright, 1915, by The Macmillan Company.







## SONGS OF AWAKENING

In Spring the night is starry;  
Sleep taps upon the door  
And not a heart is sorry  
Though daylight is no more;  
It knows the night is bringing  
Dreams for another day, —  
*And April winds are singing  
The silent hours away.*

*Michael Lewis*

### SONG

April, April,  
Laugh thy girlish laughter;  
Then, the moment after,  
Weep thy girlish tears,  
April, that mine ears  
Like a lover greetest,  
If I tell thee, sweetest,  
All my hopes and fears.  
April, April,  
Laugh thy golden laughter,  
But, the moment after,  
Weep thy golden tears!

*William Watson*

### SUNRISE

The east is yellow as a daffodil.  
Three steeples — three stark swarthy arms — are thrust  
Up from the town. The gnarlèd poplars thrill  
Down the long street in some keen salty gust —  
Straight from the sea and all the sailing ships —

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Turn white, black, white again, with noises sweet  
And swift. Back to the night the last star slips.  
High up the air is motionless, a sheet  
Of light. The east grows yellower apace,  
And trembles: then, once more, and suddenly,  
The salt wind blows, and in that moment's space  
Flame roofs, and poplar-tops, and steeples three;  
From out the mist that wraps the river-ways,  
The little boats, like torches, start ablaze.

*Lizette Woodworth Reese*

## THE WAKERS

The joyous morning ran and kissed the grass  
And drew his fingers through her sleeping hair,  
And cried, "Before thy flowers are well awake  
Rise, and the lingering darkness from thee shake.

"Before the daisy and the sorrel buy  
Their brightness back from that close-folding night,  
Come, and the shadows from thy bosom shake,  
Awake from thy thick sleep, awake, awake!"

Then the grass of that mounded meadow stirred  
Above the Roman bones that may not stir  
Though joyous morning whispered, shouted, sang:  
The grass stirred as that happy music rang.

O, what a wondrous rustling everywhere!  
The steady shadows shook and thinned and died,  
The shining grass flashed brightness back for brightness,  
And sleep was gone, and there was heavenly lightness.

As if she had found wings, light as the wind,  
The grass flew, bent with the wind, from east to west,

## SONGS OF AWAKENING

Chased by one wild grey cloud, and flashing all  
Her dews for happiness to hear morning call. . . .

But even as I stepped out the brightness dimmed,  
I saw the fading edge of all delight.

The sober morning waked the drowsy herds,  
And there was the old scolding of the birds.

*John Freeman*

### WHO CALLS ?

“Listen, children, listen, won’t you come into the night?  
The stars have set their candle gleam, the moon her lantern light.

I’m piping little tunes for you to catch your dancing feet.  
There’s glory in the heavens, but there’s magic in the street.

There’s jesting here and carnival: the cost of a balloon  
Is an ancient rhyme said backwards, and a wish upon the moon.

The city walls and city streets! —you shall make of these

As fair a thing as country roads and blossomy apple trees.”

“What watchman calls us in the night, and plays a little tune

That turns our tongues to talking now of April, May and June?

Who bids us come with nimble feet and snapping finger tips? ”

“I am the Spring, the Spring, the Spring with laughter on my lips.”

*Frances Clarke*



*BREATH OF THE EARTH*



# BREATH OF THE EARTH

## PRELUDE

Still south I went and west and south again,  
Through Wicklow from the morning till the night,  
And far from cities and the sights of men,  
Lived with the sunshine and the moon's delight.

I knew the stars, the flowers, and the birds,  
The grey and wintry sides of many glens,  
And did but half remember human words,  
In converse with the mountains, moors and fens.

*J. M. Synge*

## GOD'S WORLD

O World, I cannot hold thee close enough!  
Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!  
Thy mists that roll and rise!  
Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag  
And all but cry with colour! That gaunt crag  
To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!  
World, World, I cannot get thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,  
But never knew I this;  
Here such a passion is  
As stretcheth me apart. Lord, I do fear  
Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year.  
My soul is all but out of me,—let fall  
No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

*Edna St. Vincent Millay*



## THIS SINGING WORLD

### NATURE'S FRIEND

Say what you like,  
All things love me!  
I pick no flowers —  
That wins the Bee.

The Summer's Moths  
Think my hand one —  
To touch their wings —  
With Wind and Sun.

The garden Mouse  
Comes near to play;  
Indeed, he turns  
His eyes away.

The Wren knows well  
I rob no nest;  
When I look in,  
She still will rest.

The hedge stops Cows,  
Or they would come  
After my voice  
Right to my home.

The Horse can tell,  
Straight from my lip,  
My hand could not  
Hold any whip.

Say what you like  
All things love me!  
Horse, Cow, and Mouse,  
Bird, Moth and Bee.

*W. H. Davies*

## BREATH OF THE EARTH

### WHO HAS SEEN THE WIND?

Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you:

But when the leaves hang trembling,

The wind is passing thro'.

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I:

But when the trees bow down their heads,

The wind is passing by.

*Christina Georgiana Rossetti*

### BOATS SAIL ON THE RIVERS

Boats sail on the rivers,

And ships sail on the seas;

But clouds that sail across the sky

Are prettier far than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,

As pretty as you please;

But the bow that bridges heaven,

And overtops the trees,

And builds a road from earth to sky,

Is prettier far than these.

*Christina Georgiana Rossetti*

### HEAT

O wind, rend open the heat,

cut apart the heat,

rend it to tatters.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Fruit cannot drop  
through this thick air —  
fruit cannot fall into heat  
that presses up and blunts  
the points of pears  
and rounds the grapes.

Cut through the heat —  
plough through it,  
turning it on either side  
of your path.

*"H. D."*

### STORM

You crash over the trees,  
you crack the live branch —  
the branch is white,  
the green crushed,  
each leaf is rent like split wood.

You burden the trees  
with black drops,  
you swirl and crash —  
you have broken off a weighted leaf  
in the wind,  
it is hurled out,  
whirls up and sinks,  
a green stone.

*"H. D."*

## BREATH OF THE EARTH

### THE STORM<sup>1</sup>

There came a wind like a bugle;  
It quivered through the grass,  
And a green chill upon the heat  
So ominous did pass  
We barred the windows and the doors  
As from an emerald ghost;  
The doom's electric moccasin  
That very instant passed.  
On a strange mob of panting trees,  
And fences fled away,  
And rivers where the houses ran  
The living looked that day.  
The bell within the steeple wild  
The flying tidings whirled.  
How much can come  
And much can go,  
And yet abide the world!

*Emily Dickinson*

### VELVET SHOES

Let us walk in the white snow  
In a soundless space;  
With footsteps quiet and slow,  
At a tranquil pace,  
Under veils of white lace.

I shall go shod in silk,  
And you in wool,  
White as a white cow's milk,

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, Little, Brown and Company, 1890.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

More beautiful  
Than the breast of a gull.

We shall walk through the still town  
In a windless peace;  
We shall step upon the white down,  
Upon silver fleece,  
Upon softer than these.

We shall walk in velvet shoes;  
Wherever we go  
Silence will fall like dews  
On white silence below.  
We shall walk in the snow.

*Elinor Wylie*

### FIRST FROST

A sparkling sunset, oranged to gold,  
Rings like a bell of sorrow told,  
Across the night of whistling cold;  
For now an arm swings near and far  
The brittle lamp of every star.  
The flowers grow in the garden pied  
Velvet, imperial, laughing-eyed,  
While on them all hovers a breath,  
The whistling frost of silver death.  
I grieve to see the wine-red crowd  
And watch and watch them, tall and proud,  
And tell them that tonight death comes,  
Beating the stars like kettle drums.  
For the last time I kiss their breasts,  
The lovely golden fleeting guests,  
Made sad to think on morning's shore





## BREATH OF THE EARTH

Their beauty will be nevermore.  
I grieve to see them fall and die  
Where kindled, burning, sparkling high  
The stars make mirrors of the sky.  
I bid them farewell in their sleep,  
Wrapped now in snowy silver seas,  
For they, immortal, will but leap  
Like us, to a more marvelous peace.  
And here I sit by them and view  
The solid sky as white frost comes,  
Knocking the winds to silver dew,  
Beating the stars like kettle drums.

*Edwin Curran*

## SONG OF SUMMER

Dis is gospel weathah sho' —  
Hills is sawt o' hazy.  
Meddahs level ez a flo'  
Callin' to de lazy.  
Sky all white wif streaks o' blue,  
Sunshine softly gleamin',  
D'ain't no wuk hit's right to do,  
Nothin's right but dreamin'.  
  
Dreamin' by a rivah side  
Wif de watahs glist'nin',  
Feelin' good an' satisfied  
Ez you lay a-list'nin'  
To the little nakid boys  
Splashin' in de watah,  
Hollerin' fu' to spress deir joys  
Jes' lak youngsters ought to.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Squir'l a-tippin' on his toes,  
So't to hide an' view you;  
Whole flocks o' camp-meetin' crows  
Shoutin' hallelujah.

Peckahwood erpon de tree  
Tappin' lak a hammah;  
Jaybird chattin' wif a bee,  
Tryin' to teach him grammah.

Breeze is blowin' wif perfume,  
Jes' enough to tease you;  
Hollyhocks is all in bloom,  
Smellin' fu' to please you.  
Go 'way, folks an' let me 'lone,  
Times is gettin' dearah —  
Summah's settin' on de th'one,  
An' I'm a-layin' neah huh!

*Paul Laurence Dunbar*

## SUMMER EVENING

The sandy cat by the Farmer's chair  
Mews at his knee for dainty fare;  
Old Rover in his moss-greened house  
Mumbles a bone, and barks at a mouse;  
In the dewy fields the cattle lie  
Chewing the cud 'neath a fading sky;  
Dobbin at manger pulls his hay:  
Gone is another summer's day.

*Walter De la Mare*

## BREATH OF THE EARTH

### NIGHT STUFF

Listen a while, the moon is a lovely woman, a lonely woman, lost in a silver dress, lost in a circus rider's silver dress.

Listen a while, the lake by night is a lonely woman, a lovely woman, circled with birches and pines mixing their green and white among stars shattered in spray clear nights.

I know the moon and the lake have twisted the roots under my heart the same as a lonely woman, a lovely woman, in a silver dress, in a circus rider's silver dress.

*Carl Sandburg*

### HARVEST SUNSET

Red gold of pools,  
Sunset furrows six o'clock,  
And the farmer done in the fields  
And the cows in the barns with bulging udders.

Take the cows and the farmer,  
Take the barns and bulging udders.  
Leave the red gold of pools  
And sunset furrows six o'clock.  
The farmer's wife is singing.  
The farmer's boy is whistling.  
I wash my hands in red gold of pools.

*Carl Sandburg*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### EVENING WATERFALL

What was the name you called me? —  
And why did you go so soon?

The crows lift their caw on the wind,  
And the wind changed and was lonely.

The warblers cry their sleepy-songs  
Across the valley gloaming,  
Across the cattle-horns of early stars.

Feathers and people in the crotch of a treetop  
Throw an evening waterfall of sleepy songs.

What was the name you called me? —  
And why did you go so soon?

*Carl Sandburg*

### FOG

The fog comes  
on little cat feet.

It sits looking  
over harbor and city  
on silent haunches  
and then moves on.

*Carl Sandburg*

# BREATH OF THE EARTH

## GLIMPSE IN AUTUMN

Ladies at a ball  
Are not so fine as these  
Richly brocaded trees  
That decorate the fall.  
  
They stand against a wall  
Of crisp October sky,  
Their plumèd heads held high,  
Like ladies at a ball.

*Jean Starr Untermeyer*

## AUTUMN

The music of the autumn winds sings low,  
Down by the ruins of the painted hills,  
Where death lies flaming with a marvelous glow,  
Upon the ash of rose and daffodils.  
But I can find no melancholy here,  
To see the naked rocks and thinning trees;  
Earth strips to grapple with the winter year:  
I see her gnarled hills plan for victories!  
  
I love the earth who goes to battle now,  
To struggle with the wintry whipping storm  
And bring the glorious spring out from the night.  
I see earth's muscles bared, her battle brow,  
And am not sad, but feel her marvelous charm  
As splendidly she plunges in the fight.

*Edwin Curran*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## AUTUMN<sup>1</sup>

The morns are meeker than they were,  
The nuts are getting brown;  
The berry's cheek is plumper,  
The rose is out of town.

The maple wears a gayer scarf,  
The field a scarlet gown.  
Lest I should be old-fashioned,  
I'll put a trinket on.

*Emily Dickinson*

## HOME-COMING

When I stepped homeward to my hill  
Dusk went before with quiet tread;  
The bare laced branches of the trees  
Were as a mist about its head.

Upon its leaf-brown breast, the rocks  
Like great grey sheep lay silent-wise;  
Between the birch trees' gleaming arms,  
The faint stars trembled in the skies.

The white brook met me half-way up  
And laughed as one that knew me well,  
To whose more clear than crystal voice  
The frost had joined a crystal spell.

The skies lay like pale-watered deep.  
Dusk ran before me to its strand

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, Little, Brown and Company, 1890.

.      *BREATH OF THE EARTH*      .

And cloudily leaned forth to touch  
The moon's slow wonder with her hand.

*Léonie Adams*

THE GARDEN YEAR

January brings the snow,  
Makes our feet and fingers glow.

February brings the rain,  
Thaws the frozen lake again.

March brings breezes, loud and shrill,  
To stir the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet,  
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs  
Skipping by their fleecy dams.

June brings tulips, lilies, roses,  
Fills the children's hands with posies.

Hot July brings cooling showers  
Apricots and gillyflowers.

August brings the sheaves of corn,  
Then the harvest home is borne.

Warm September brings the fruit;  
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

Fresh October brings the pheasant;  
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.

Dull November brings the blast;  
Then the leaves are whirling fast.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Chill December brings the sleet,  
Blazing fire, and Christmas treat.

*Sara Coleridge*

### "I AM HE THAT WALKS"

I am he that walks with the tender and growing Night,  
I call to the earth and sea half-held by the Night.

Press close, bare-bosomed Night! Press close, magnetic,  
nourishing Night!

Night of south winds! Night of the large few stars!  
Still, nodding night! Mad, naked, summer night.

Smile, O voluptuous, cool-breathed Earth!  
Earth of the slumbering and liquid trees!  
Earth of departed sunset! Earth of the mountains, misty-  
topt!

Earth of the vitreous pour of the full moon, just tinged  
with blue!

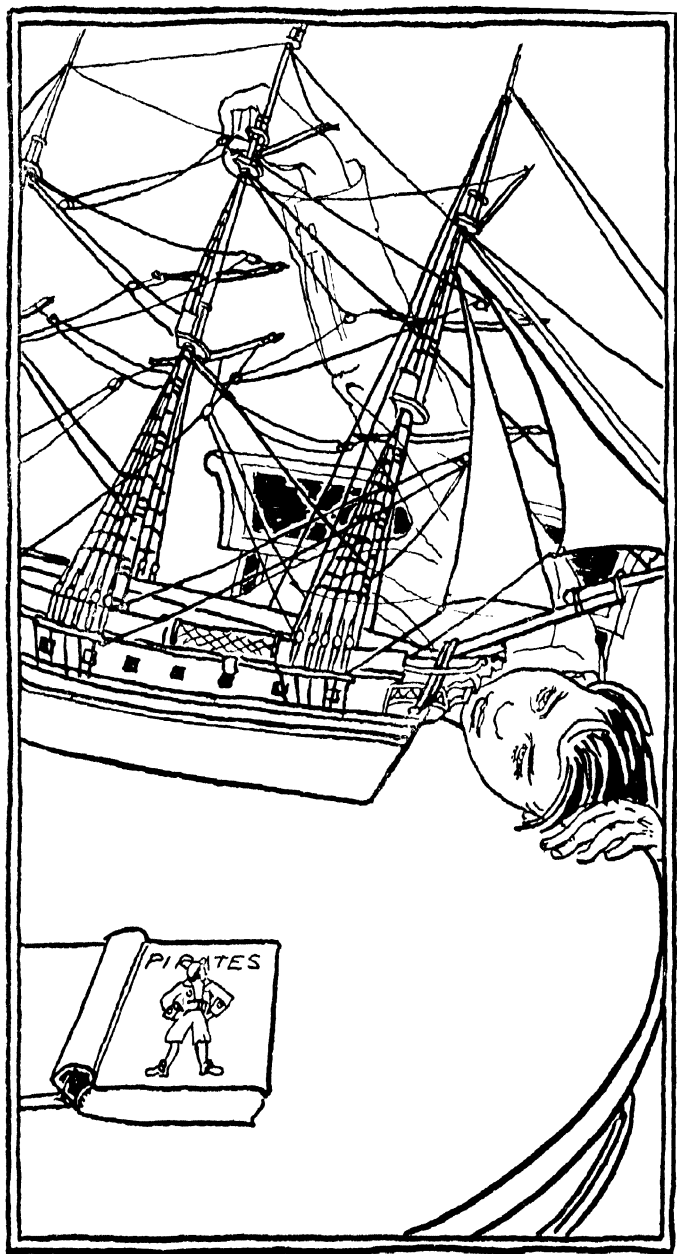
Earth of shine and dark, mottling the tide of the river!  
Earth of the limpid grey of clouds, brighter and clearer  
for my sake!

Far-swooping elbowed earth! Rich, apple-blossomed earth!  
Smile, for your lover comes!

*Walt Whitman*

*SURGE OF THE SEA*





## *SURGE OF THE SEA*

### THE SEA GYPSY

I am fevered with the sunset,  
I am fretful with the bay,  
For the wander-thirst is on me  
And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,  
With her topsails shot with fire,  
And my heart has gone aboard her  
For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again to-morrow!  
With the sunset I must be  
Hull down on the trail of rapture  
In the wonder of the Sea.

*Richard Hovey*

### A WANDERER'S SONG

A wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels,  
I am tired of brick and stone and rumbling wagon-wheels;  
I hunger for the sea's edge, the limits of the land,  
Where the wild old Atlantic is shouting on the sand.

Oh, I'll be going, leaving the noises of the street,  
To where a lifting foresail-foot is yanking at the sheet;  
To a windy, tossing anchorage where yawls and ketches<sup>1</sup>  
ride,

Oh, I'll be going, going, until I meet the tide.

And first I'll hear the sea-wind, the mewing of the gulls,  
The clucking, sucking of the sea about the rusty hulls,

<sup>1</sup> *Yawls and ketches*: two-masted boats.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

The songs at the capstan in the hooker warping out,  
And then the heart of me'll know I'm there or thereabout.

Oh, I am tired of brick and stone, the heart of me is sick,  
For windy green, unquiet sea, the realm of Moby Dick;  
And I'll be going, going, from the roaring of the wheels,  
For a wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels.

*John Masefield*

## THE SEA

*(From "The Triumph of Time")*

I will go back to the great sweet mother, —  
Mother and lover of men, the Sea.

I will go down to her, I and none other,  
Close with her, kiss her, and mix her with me;  
Cling to her, strive with her, hold her fast.  
O fair white mother, in days long past  
Born without sister, born without brother,  
Set free my soul as thy soul is free!

O fair green-girdled mother of mine,  
Sea, that art clothed with the sun and the rain,  
Thy sweet hard kisses are strong like wine,  
Thy large embraces are keen like pain.  
Save me and hide me with all thy waves,  
Find me one grave of thy thousand graves,  
Those pure cold populous graves of thine,  
Wrought without hand in a world without stain.

I shall sleep, and move with the moving ships,  
Change as the winds change, veer in the tide;  
My lips will feast on the foam of thy lips,  
I shall rise with thy rising, with thee subside;

## SURGE OF THE SEA

Sleep, and not know if she be, if she were,  
Filled full of life to the eyes and hair,  
As a rose is fulfilled to the rose-leaf tips  
    With splendid summer and perfume and pride.

This woven raiment of nights and days,  
    Were it once cast off and unwound from me,  
Naked and glad would I walk in thy ways,  
    Alive and aware of thy waves and thee;  
Clear of the whole world, hidden at home,  
Clothed with the green, and crowned with the foam,  
A pulse of the life of thy straits and bays,  
    A vein in the heart of the streams of the Sea.

*A. C. Swinburne*

### FROM "SWIMMERS"

Oh, the swift plunge into the cool, green dark —  
The windy waters rushing past me, through me;  
Filled with a sense of some heroic lark,  
Exulting in a vigor clean and roomy.  
Swiftly I rose to meet the feline sea  
That sprang upon me with a hundred claws,  
And grappled, pulled me down and played with me.  
Then, tense and breathless in the tightening pause  
When one wave grows into a toppling acre,  
I dived headlong into the foremost breaker;  
Pitting against a cold and turbulent strife  
The feverish intensity of life. . . .  
Out of the foam I lurched and rode the wave,  
Swimming, hand over hand, against the wind.  
I felt the sea's vain pounding, and I grinned  
Knowing I was its master, not its slave!

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Oh, the proud total of those lusty hours —  
The give-and-take of rough and vigorous tussles  
With happy sinews and rejoicing muscles;  
The knowledge of my own miraculous powers;  
Feeling the force in one small body bent  
To curb and tame this towering element. . . .

*Louis Untermeyer*

## THE NOISE OF WATERS

All day I hear the noise of waters  
    Making moan,  
Sad as the sea-bird is, when going  
    Forth alone,  
He hears the winds cry to the waters'  
    Monotone.

The grey winds, the cold winds are blowing  
    Where I go.  
I hear the noise of many waters  
    Far below.  
All day, all night, I hear them flowing  
    To and fro.

*James Joyce*

## OLD SHIPS

There is a memory stays upon old ships,  
    A weightless cargo in the musty hold, —  
Of bright lagoons and prow-caressing lips,  
    Of stormy midnights, — and a tale untold.  
They have remembered islands in the dawn,

## SURGE OF THE SEA

And windy capes that tried their slender spars,  
And tortuous channels where their keels have gone,  
And calm blue nights of stillness and the stars.

Ah, never think that ships forget a shore,  
Or bitter seas, or winds that made them wise;  
There is a dream upon them, evermore;  
And there be some who say that sunk ships rise  
To seek familiar harbors in the night,  
Blowing in mists, their spectral sails like light.

*David Morton*

## BALLADE OF A SHIP

Down by the flash of the restless water  
The dim White Ship like a white bird lay;  
Laughing at life and the world they sought her,  
And out she swung to the silvering bay.  
Then off they flew on their roustering way,  
And the keen moon fired the light foam flying  
Up from the flood where the faint stars play,  
And the bones of the brave in the wave are lying.

'Twas a king's fair son with a king's fair daughter,  
And full three hundred beside, they say, —  
Revelling on for the lone, cold slaughter  
So soon to seize them and hide them for aye;  
But they danced and they drank and their souls grew  
gay,  
Nor ever they knew of a ghoul's eye spying  
Their splendor a flickering phantom to stray  
Where the bones of the brave in the wave are lying.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Through the mist of a drunken dream they brought her  
    (This wild white bird) for the sea-fiend's prey:  
The pitiless reef in his hard clutch caught her,  
    And hurled her down where the dead men stay.  
A torturing silence of wan dismay —  
Shrieks and curses of mad souls dying —  
    Then down they sank to slumber and sway  
Where the bones of the brave in the wave are lying.

### ENVOY

Prince, do you sleep to the sound alway  
    Of the mournful surge and the sea-birds' crying? —  
Or does love still shudder and steel still slay,  
    Where the bones of the brave in the wave are lying?  
                                *Edwin Arlington Robinson*

### OREAD

Whirl up, sea —  
Whirl your pointed pines.  
Splash your great pines  
On our rocks.  
Hurl your green over us —  
Cover us with your pools of fir.  
                                “*H. D.*”

### SEA CALL

My old love for the water has come back again —  
    I had forgotten its surging, so long, so long away;  
Sapphire-blue in the sunlight and green-grey in the rain,  
    And the same waves cresting, and the same sharp spray;

## SURGE OF THE SEA

There was left a wave in my heart when I went to the in-  
land towns,  
Something that moved and murmured in the days when  
I forgot;  
Vivid flowers of the gardens or thick long grass of the  
downs —  
What were the sweets of the summer days, where the  
calling waves were not?  
My old love for the water has come back once more;  
The wave of the deep draws full, and the wave in my  
heart lifts high;  
This is my own old country and my own old shore . . .  
And I cannot leave the water till the day I die.

*Margaret Widdemer*

## HIGH-TIDE

I edged back against the night.  
The sea growled assault on the wave-bitten shore.  
And the breakers,  
Like young and impatient hounds,  
Sprang, with rough joy on the shrinking sand.  
Sprang — but were drawn back slowly,  
With a long, relentless pull,  
Whimpering, into the dark.  
Then I saw who held them captive;  
And I saw how they were bound  
With a broad and quivering leash of light,  
Held by the moon,  
As, calm and unsmiling,  
She walked the deep fields of the sky.

*Jean Starr Untermeyer*





*OPEN ROADS*



## OPEN ROADS

### THE JOYS OF THE ROAD

Now the joys of the road are chiefly these:  
A crimson touch on the hard-wood trees;  
A vagrant's morning wide and blue,  
In early fall, when the wind walks, too;  
A shadowy highway cool and brown,  
Alluring up and enticing down  
From rippled water to dappled swamp,  
From purple glory to scarlet pomp;  
The outward eye, the quiet will,  
And the striding hart from hill to hill;  
The tempter apple over the fence;  
The cobweb bloom on the yellow quince;  
The palish asters along the wood,  
A lyric touch of the solitude;  
An open hand, an easy shoe,  
And a hope to make the day go through,—  
Another to sleep with, and a third  
To wake me up at the voice of a bird;  
The resonant, far-listening morn,  
And the hoarse whisper of the corn;  
The crickets mourning their comrades lost,  
In the night's retreat from the gathering frost;  
(Or is it their slogan, plaintive and shrill,  
As they beat on their corselets, valiant still?)

## THIS SINGING WORLD

A hunger fit for the kings of the sea,  
And a loaf of bread for Dickon and me;

A thirst like that of the Thirsty Sword,  
And a jug of cider on the board;

An idle noon, a bubbling spring,  
The sea in the pine-tops murmuring;

A scrap of gossip at the ferry;  
A comrade neither glum nor merry,

Asking nothing, revealing naught,  
But minting his words from a fund of thought,

A keeper of silence eloquent,  
Needy, yet royally well content,

Of the mettled breed, yet abhorring strife,  
And full of the mellow juice of life,

No fidget and no reformer, just  
A calm observer of ought and must,

A lover of books, but a reader of man,  
No cynic and no charlatan,

Who never defers and never demands,  
But, smiling, takes the world in his hands, —

Seeing it good as when God first saw  
And gave it the weight of his will for law.

And O the joy that is never won,  
But follows and follows the journeying sun,

By marsh and tide, by meadow and stream,  
A will-o'-the-wind, a light-o'-dream,

## OPEN ROADS

Delusion afar, delight anear,  
From morrow to morrow, from year to year,  
A jack-o'-lantern, a fairy fire,  
A dare, a bliss, and a desire!  
The racy smell of the forest loam,  
When the stealthy, sad-heart leaves go home;  
(O leaves, O leaves, I am one with you,  
Of the mould and the sun and the wind and the dew!)  
The broad gold wake of the afternoon;  
The silent fleck of the cold new moon;  
The sound of the hollow sea's release  
From stormy tumult to starry peace;  
With only another league to wend;  
And two brown arms at the journey's end!  
These are the joys of the open road—  
For him who travels without a load.

*Bliss Carman*

## THE LONG ROAD

White in the moon the long road lies,  
The moon stands blank above;  
White in the moon the long road lies  
That leads me from my love.  
Still hangs the hedge without a gust,  
Still, still the shadows stay:  
My feet upon the moonlit dust  
Pursue the ceaseless way.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

The world is round, so travellers tell,  
And straight though reach the track,  
Trudge on, trudge on, 'twill all be well  
The way will guide one back.

But ere the circle homeward hies  
Far, far must it remove:  
White in the moon the long road lies  
That leads me from my love.

*A. E. Housman*

## THE SONG OF THE UNGIRT RUNNERS

We swing ungirded hips,  
And lightened are our eyes;  
The rain is on our lips,  
We do not run for prize.  
We know not whom we trust  
Nor whitherward we fare,  
But we run because we must  
Through the great wide air.

The waters of the seas  
Are troubled as by storm.  
The tempest strips the trees  
And does not leave them warm.  
Does the tearing tempest pause?  
Do the tree-tops ask it why?  
So we run without a cause  
'Neath the big bare sky.

The rain is on our lips,  
We do not run for prize.







## OPEN ROADS

But the storm the water whips  
And the wave howls to the skies.  
The winds arise and strike it  
And scatter it like sand,  
And we run because we like it  
Through the broad bright land.

*Charles Hamilton Sorley*

## THE WEST WIND

It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries;  
I never hear the west wind but tears are in my eyes.  
For it comes from the west lands, the old brown hills,  
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as tired as mine,  
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's like wine.  
There is cool green grass there, where men may lie at rest,  
And the thrushes are in song there, fluting from the nest.

"Will ye not come home, brother? ye have been long away,  
It's April, and blossom time, and white is the may;  
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is the rain, —  
Will ye not come home, brother, home to us again?

"The young corn is green, brother, where the rabbits run,  
It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm rain and sun.  
It's song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a man's brain,  
To hear the wild bees and see the merry spring again.

"Larks are singing in the west, brother, above the green  
wheat,  
So will ye not come home, brother, and rest your tired  
feet?

## THIS SINGING WORLD

I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep for aching  
eyes,"

Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries.

It's the white road westwards is the road I must tread  
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest for heart and  
head,

To the violets and the warm hearts and the thrushes' song,  
In the fine land, the west land, the land where I belong.

*John Masefield*

## TO THE WINTER WIND

Wind of the winter, drive the ships home,  
From tropic islands  
Whirl the grey cloudrack,  
Spatter the rocks with foam.

Blind wind of the night,  
Raging, careering,  
Shriek to me through the keyhole,  
Shout to me down the chimney,  
Whistle and moan through the pinewood out of sight.

Bring Christmas here,  
The log on the hearth,  
The cattle in stall.  
Pile by the housedoor  
The snowdrift, untroubled.  
Put ice on the wall.

*John Gould Fletcher*

## OPEN ROADS

### WANDER-THIRST

Beyond the East the sunrise, beyond the West the sea,  
And East and West the wander-thirst that will not let  
me be;

It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say good-  
bye;

For the seas call and the stars call, and oh! the call of  
the sky.

I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue  
hills are,

But a man can have the Sun for friend, and for his guide  
a star;

And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is  
heard,

For the river calls and the road calls, and oh! the call of  
a bird!

Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day  
The old shops draw to home again, the young ships sail  
away;

And come I may, but go I must, and, if men ask you why,  
You may put the blame on the stars and the sun and the  
white road and the sky.

*Gerald Gould*

### I WANT TO GO WANDERING

I want to go wandering. Who shall declare  
I will regret if I dare?

To the rich days of age —

To some mid-afternoon —

## THIS SINGING WORLD

A wide fenceless prairie,  
A lonely old tune,  
Ant-hills and sunflowers,  
And sunset too soon.

Behind the brown mountain  
The sun will go down;  
I shall climb, I shall climb,  
To the sumptuous crown;  
To the rocks of the summit,  
And find some strange things: —  
Some echo of echoes  
When the thunder-wind sings;  
Old Spanish necklaces,  
Indian rings,  
Or a feeble old eagle  
With great, dragging wings.  
He may leave me and soar;  
But if he shall die,  
I shall bury him deep  
While the thunder-winds cry.

And there, as the last of my earth-nights go:  
What is the thing I shall know?

With a feather cast off from his wings  
I shall write, be it revel or psalm,  
Or whisper of redwood, or cypress, or palm, —  
The treasure of dream that he brings.

The soul of the eagle will call,  
Whether he lives or he dies: —  
The cliff and the prairies call,  
The sage-bush and starlight sing,  
And the songs of my far-away Sangamon call

## OPEN ROADS

From the plume of the bird of the Rockies,  
And midnight's omnipotent wing —  
The last of my earth-nights will ring  
With cries from a far haunted river,  
And all of my wandering,  
    Wandering,  
    Wandering,  
    Wandering. . . .

*Vachel Lindsay*

## DO YOU FEAR THE WIND?

Do you fear the force of the wind,  
The slash of the rain?  
Go face them and fight them,  
Be savage again.  
Go hungry and cold like the wolf,  
Go wade like the crane:  
The palms of your hands will thicken,  
The skin of your cheeks will tan,  
You'll grow ragged and weary and swarthy,  
    But you'll walk like a man!

*Hamlin Garland*

## "OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY"

Where forlorn sunsets flare and fade  
    On desolate sea and lonely sand,  
Out of the silence and the shade  
    What is the voice of strange command  
Calling you still, as friend calls friend  
    With love that cannot brook delay,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

To rise and follow the ways that wend  
Over the hills and far away?

Hark in the city, street on street  
A roaring reach of death and life,  
Of vortices that clash and fleet  
And ruin in appointed strife,  
Hark to it calling, calling clear,  
Calling until you cannot stay  
From dearer things than your own most dear  
Over the hills and far away.

Out of the sound of the ebb-and-flow,  
Out of the sight of lamp and star,  
It calls you where the good winds blow,  
And the unchanging meadows are:  
From faded hopes and hopes agleam,  
It calls you, calls you night and day  
Beyond the dark into the dream  
Over the hills and far away.

*W. E. Henley*

## "I HEAR THE WOODLANDS CALLING"

I hear the woodlands calling, and their red is like the blare  
Of trumpets in the air,  
Where rebel Autumn plants her tents and crowns her  
gypsy hair.

I hear her beauty calling glad, with crimson and with gold,  
As oft it called of old;  
And I must forth and greet her there and clasp her close  
and hold.

## OPEN ROADS

As yesterday, again to-day, my heart will run to her,  
    The gypsy wanderer,  
Through scarlet of the berry-pod and purple of the burr.  
The vines that vision forth her cheeks shall tell me where  
    she lies,  
    Soft gazing at the skies;  
And I will steal upon her dreams and look into her eyes.  
The sumach that repeats her lips shall tell me where she  
    smiles,  
    Who still my heart beguiles,  
And I will speak her face to face and lounge with her  
    for miles.  
A riot and a tangle there, a blur of gold and gray;  
    She surely went this way —  
Or, so it seems, the maples cry, the cloudy asters say.  
Oh, I must up and strike the trail, that often I have gone,  
    At sunset and at dawn,  
Where all the beauty of the world puts all her splendor on.  
I hear her bugles on the hills; I see her banners blowing,  
    And all her campfires glowing, —  
The campfires of her dreams, — and I — I must be up  
    and going.

*Madison Cawein.*

## AFTERNOON ON A HILL

I will be the gladdest thing  
    Under the sun!  
I will touch a hundred flowers  
    And not pick one.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

I will look at cliffs and clouds  
With quiet eyes,  
Watch the wind bow down the grass,  
And the grass rise.

And when lights begin to show  
Up from the town,  
I will mark which must be mine,  
And then start down!

*Edna St. Vincent Millay*

## THE ROAD TO ANYWHERE

Across the places deep and dim,  
And places brown and bare,  
It reaches to the planet's rim —  
The Road to Anywhere.

Now east is east, and west is west,  
But north lies in between,  
And he is blest whose feet have prest  
The road that's cool and green.

The road of roads for them that dare  
The lightest whim obey,  
To follow where the moose or bear  
Has brushed his headlong way.

The secrets that these tangles house  
Are step by step revealed,  
While, to the sun, the grass and boughs  
A store of odors yield.

More sweet these odors in the sun  
Than swim in chemists' jars;

## OPEN ROADS

And when the fragrant day is done,  
Night — and a shoal of stars.

Oh, east is east, and west is west,  
But north lies full and fair;  
And blest is he who follows free  
The Road to Anywhere.

*Bert Leston Taylor*

## THE ROAD

As one who walks in sleep, up a familiar lane  
I went, my road to discover:  
In my head was dark bewilderment and in my heart a pain;  
The branches hung straight over.

At the summit the sky blazed with endless stars, refired  
By the ebbing of the day;  
The earth was darkly beautiful and I was very tired.  
There was my road, and nothing more to say.

*John Gould Fletcher*



*COMMON THINGS*



## COMMON THINGS

### THE PASTURE

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;  
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away  
(And wait to watch the water clear, I may):  
I sha'n't be gone long. — You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf  
That's standing by the mother. It's so young,  
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.  
I sha'n't be gone long. — *You come too.*

*Robert Frost*

### SIMPLICITY <sup>1</sup>

How happy is the little stone  
That rambles in the road alone,  
And doesn't care about careers,  
And exigencies never fears;  
Whose coat of elemental brown  
A passing universe put on;  
And independent as the sun,  
Associates or glows alone,  
Fulfilling absolute decree  
In casual simplicity.

*Emily Dickinson*

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, Little, Brown and Company, 1890.

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## PEDIGREE<sup>1</sup>

The pedigree of honey  
Does not concern the bee;  
A clover, any time, to him  
Is aristocracy.

*Emily Dickinson*

## LOVELIEST OF TREES

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough,  
And stands about the woodland ride<sup>2</sup>  
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,  
Twenty will not come again,  
And take from seventy springs a score,  
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom  
Fifty springs are little room,  
About the woodlands I will go  
To see the cherry hung with snow.

*A. E. Housman*

## THE FIRST DANDELION

Simple and fresh and fair from winter's close emerging,  
As if no artifice of fashion, business, politics, had ever  
been,

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, Little, Brown and Company, 1890.

<sup>2</sup> Woodland ride: a road cut through a forest or in a wood.

## COMMON THINGS

Forth from its sunny nook of sheltered grass — innocent,  
golden, calm as the dawn,  
The spring's first dandelion shows its trustful face.

*Walt Whitman*

### DANDELION <sup>1</sup>

O Little Soldier with the golden helmet,  
What are you guarding on my lawn?  
You with your green gun  
And your yellow beard,  
Why do you stand so stiff?  
There is only the grass to fight!

*Hilda Conkling*

*(Written at the age of eight)*

### TULIP

Clean as a lady  
cool as glass  
fresh without fragrance  
the tulip was.

The craftsman who carved her  
of metal prayed  
"Live, oh thou lovely":  
Half-metal she stayed.

*Humbert Wolfe*

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted by permission from *Poems by A Little Girl* by Hilda Conkling. Copyright, 1920, by Frederick A. Stokes Company



# THIS SINGING WORLD

## DAISIES

At evening when I go to bed  
I see the stars shine overhead;  
They are the little daisies white  
That dot the meadow of the night.

And often while I'm dreaming so,  
Across the sky the moon will go;  
It is a lady, sweet and fair,  
Who comes to gather daisies there.

For, when at morning I arise,  
There's not a star left in the skies;  
She's picked them all and dropped them down  
Into the meadows of the town.

*Frank Dempster Sherman*

## DAISIES

Over the shoulders and slopes of the dune  
I saw the white daisies go down to the sea,  
A host in the sunshine, an army in June,  
The people God sends us to set our hearts free.

The bobolinks rallied them up from the dell,  
The orioles whistled them out of the wood;  
And all of their singing was, "Earth, it is well!"  
And all of their dancing was, "Life, thou art good!"

*Bliss Carman*

## COMMON THINGS

### THE HUNGRY HEART

My heart, being hungry, feeds on food

The fat of heart despise.

Beauty where beauty never stood,

And sweet where no sweet lies

I gather to my querulous need,

Having a growing heart to feed.

It may be, when my heart is dull,

Having attained its girth,

I shall not find so beautiful

The meagre shapes of earth,

Nor linger in the rain to mark

The smell of tansy through the dark.

*Edna St. Vincent Millay*

### TO A SNOWFLAKE

What heart could have thought you? —

Past our devisal

(O filigree petal!)

Fashioned so purely,

Fragilely, surely,

From what Paradisal

Imagineless metal,

Too costly for cost?

Who hammered you, wrought you,

From argentine vapor? —

“ God was my shaper.

Passing surmised,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

He hammered, He wrought me,  
From curled silver vapor,  
To lust of his mind: —  
Thou couldst not have thought me!  
So purely, so palely,  
Tinily, surely,  
Mightily, frailly,  
Insculped and embossed,  
With His hammer of wind,  
And His graver of frost.”

*Francis Thompson*

## SONG FOR A LITTLE HOUSE<sup>1</sup>

I'm glad our house is a little house,  
Not too tall nor too wide:  
I'm glad the hovering butterflies  
Feel free to come inside.

Our little house is a friendly house,  
It is not shy or vain;  
It gossips with the talking trees,  
And makes friends with the rain.

And quick leaves cast a shimmer of green  
Against our whited walls,  
And in the phlox, the courteous bees  
Are paying duty calls.

*Christopher Morley*

<sup>1</sup> From *Chimney Smoke* by Christopher Morley. Copyright 1917, 1920, 1921, George H. Doran Company, Publishers.

## COMMON THINGS

### PRAYER FOR THIS HOUSE

May nothing evil cross this door,  
And may ill-fortune never pry  
About these windows; may the roar  
And rains go by.

Strengthened by faith, the rafters will  
Withstand the battering of the storm.  
This hearth, though all the world grow chill  
Will keep you warm.

Peace shall walk softly through these rooms,  
Touching your lips with holy wine,  
Till every casual corner blooms  
Into a shrine.

Laughter shall drown the raucous shout  
And, though the sheltering walls are thin,  
May they be strong to keep hate out  
And hold love in.

*Louis Untermeyer*

### BELLS IN THE COUNTRY

Bells in the country,  
They sing the heart to rest  
When night is on the high road  
And day is in the west.

And once they came to my house  
As soft as beggars shod,  
And brought it nearer heaven,  
And maybe nearer God.

*Robert Nathan*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## ESCAPE AT BEDTIME

The lights from the parlor and kitchen shone out  
Through the blinds and the windows and bars;  
And high overhead and all moving about,  
There were thousands of millions of stars.  
There ne'er were such thousands of leaves on a tree,  
Nor of people in church or the Park,  
As the crowds of the stars that looked down upon me,  
And that glittered and winked in the dark.

The Dog, and the Plough, and the Hunter, and all,  
And the star of the sailor, and Mars,  
These shone in the sky, and the pail by the wall  
Would be half full of water and stars.  
They saw me at last, and they chased me with cries,  
And they soon had me packed into bed;  
But the glory kept shining and bright in my eyes,  
And the stars going round in my head.

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

## THE UNREALIZED IDEAL

My only Love is always near, —  
In country or in town  
I see her twinkling feet, I hear  
The whisper of her gown.

She foots it ever fair and young,  
Her locks are tied in haste,  
And one is o'er her shoulder flung,  
And hangs below her waist.

## COMMON THINGS

She ran before me in the meads;  
And down this world-worn track  
She leads me on; but while she leads  
She never gazes back.

And yet her voice is in my dreams,  
To witch me more and more;  
That wooing voice! Ah me, it seems  
Less near me than of yore.

Lightly I sped when hope was high,  
And youth beguiled the chase;  
I follow — follow still; but I  
Shall never see her Face.

*Frederick Locker Lampson*

## MOON SONG

The moonlight breaks upon the city's towers,  
And falls amid cemented steel and stone,  
Shedding its lustrous light like white-lipped flowers  
Across the ruins of a storm wind-blown.

Upon the clothes behind the tenement  
That hang like ghosts suspended from thin lines,  
To lovely, living things indifferent,  
Incongruous and strange the moonlight shines.

There is no magic from your presence here;  
O moon, mad moon, tuck up your trailing robe.  
Its silver seems so ancient and severe  
Against the glow of one electric globe.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Go, spill your beauty on the laughing faces  
Of happy flowers of a thousand hues,  
That wait on tiptoe in the wilding spaces  
To drink your wine with heavy draughts of dews.  
*Claude McKay*

## THE STREET-MUSICIAN

He plays for all the little side-streets, while  
A worn, half-wistful smile  
Kindles his face when people passing here  
Stop and draw near.  
So slight a note . . . and yet the thundering town  
Has failed to roar it down;  
Under the huge despairs, the shattering blows,  
It lifts and grows.  
Incongruous, unbidden and absurd;  
And yet the street is stirred.  
As men behold, for all its dark disguise,  
The Dream arise!

*Anonymous*

## A WASTED DAY

I spoiled the day;  
Hotly, in haste,  
All the calm hours  
I gashed and defaced.  
Let me forget,  
Let me embark  
— Sleep for my boat —  
And sail through the dark.

## COMMON THINGS

Till a new day  
Heaven shall send,  
Whole as an apple,  
Kind as a friend.

*Frances Cornford*

## SATURDAY NIGHT

The lights of Saturday night beat golden, golden over the  
pillared street —

The long plate-glass of a Dream-World olden is as the  
footlights shining sweet —

Street-lamp — flambeau — glamour of trolley — comet-  
trail of the trains above

Splash where the jostling crowds are jolly with echoing  
laughter and human love.

This is the City of the Enchanted: and these are her  
Enchanted People:

Far and far is Daylight, haunted with whistle of mill and  
bell of steeple.

The Eastern tenements loose the women, the Western flats  
release the wives

To touch, where all the ways are common, a glory to their  
sweated lives.

The leather of shoes in the brilliant casement sheds a  
lustre over the heart,

The high-heaped fruit in the flaring basement glows with  
the tints of Turner's art.

Darwin's dream and the eye of Spencer saw not such a  
gloried race

As here, in copper light intenser than desert sun, glides  
face by face.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

This drab washwoman, dazed and breathless, ray-chiselled  
in the golden stream,

Is a magic statue standing deathless—her tub and soap-  
suds touched with Dream.

Yea, in this people, glamour-sunnied, democracy wins  
heaven again;

Here the unlearned and the unmoneyed laugh in the lights  
of Lover's Land.

O Dream-World lights that lift through the ether millions  
of miles to the Milky Way.

To-night Earth rolls through a golden weather that lights  
the Pleiades where they play!

Yet . . . God? Does He lead these sons and daughters?

Yea, do they feel, with a passion that stills,

God on the face of the moving waters, God in the quiet  
of the hills?

Yet . . . what if the million-mantled mountains, and what  
if the million-moving sea

Are here alone in façades and fountains—our deep stone-  
world of humanity—

We builders of cities and civilizations walled away from  
the sea and the sod

Must reach, dream-led, for our revelations through one  
another—as far as God.

Through one another—through one another—no more  
the gleam on sea or land—

But so close that we see the Brother—and understand—  
and understand!

Till, drawn in, swept still closer, closer, we see the gleam  
in the human clod,

And clerk and foreman, peddler and grocer are in our  
Family of God!

*James Oppenheim*

## COMMON THINGS

### SUNDAY EVENING IN THE COMMON

Look — on the topmost branches of the world  
The blossoms of the myriad stars are thick;  
Over the huddled rows of stone and brick,  
A few, sad wisps of empty smoke are curled  
Like ghosts, languid and sick.

One breathless moment now the city's moaning  
Fades, and the endless streets seem vague and dim;  
There is no sound around the whole world's rim,  
Save in the distance a small band is droning  
Some desolate old hymn.

Van Wyck, how often have we been together  
When this same moment made all mysteries clear;  
— The infinite stars that brood above us here,  
And the gray city in the soft June weather,  
So tawdry and so dear!

*John Hall Wheelock*

### THE COMMONPLACE

The commonplace I sing;  
How cheap is health! how cheap nobility!  
Abstinence, no falsehood, no gluttony.  
The open air I sing, freedom, toleration,  
(Take here the mainest lesson — less from books — less  
from the schools,)  
The common day and night — the common earth and  
waters,  
Your farm — your work, trade, occupation,  
The democratic wisdom underneath, like solid ground  
for all.

*Walt Whitman*



*PLACES*



## PLACES

### THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,  
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;  
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,  
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,  
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the  
cricket sings;  
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,  
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,  
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

*William Butler Yeats*

### THE WAVES OF BREFFNY

The grand road from the mountain goes shining to the sea,  
And there is traffic on it and many a horse and cart,  
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me  
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through  
my heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the hill,  
And there is glory in it; and terror on the wind:  
But the haunted air of twilight is very strange and still,  
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my mind.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on their  
way,  
Shining green and silver with the hidden herring shoal;  
But the little waves of Breffny have drenched my heart  
in spray,  
And the little waves of Breffny go stumbling through  
my soul.

*Eva Gore-Booth*

## TEWKESBURY ROAD

It is good to be out on the road, and going one knows  
not where,  
Going through meadow and village, one knows not  
whither nor why;  
Through the grey light drift of the dust, in the keen cool  
rush of the air,  
Under the flying white clouds, and the broad blue lift  
of the sky;  
And to halt at the chattering brook, in the tall green fern  
at the brink  
Where the harebell grows, and the gorse, and the fox-  
gloves purple and white;  
Where the shy-eyed delicate deer troop down to the pools  
to drink,  
When the stars are mellow and large at the coming on  
of the night.  
O! to feel the warmth of the rain, and the homely smell  
of the earth,  
Is a tune for the blood to jig to, a joy past power of  
words;

## PLACES

And the blessed green comely meadows seem all a-ripple  
with mirth

At the lilt of the shifting feet, and the dear wild cry  
of the birds.

*John Masefield*

## A STREET SCENE

The east is a clear violet mass  
Behind the houses high;  
The laborers with their kettles pass;  
The carts go creaking by.

Carved out against the tender sky,  
The convent gables lift;  
Half way below, the old boughs lie  
Heaped in a great white drift.

They tremble in the passionate air;  
They part, and clean and sweet  
The cherry flakes fall here, fall there;  
A handful stirs the street.

The workmen look up as they go;  
And one, remembering plain  
How white the Irish orchards blow,  
Turns back, and looks again.

*Lizette Woodworth Reese*

## THE HOUSE ON THE HILL

They are all gone away,  
The House is shut and still,  
There is nothing more to say.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Through broken walls and gray  
The winds blow bleak and shrill:  
They are all gone away.

Nor is there one to-day  
To speak them good or ill:  
There is nothing more to say.

Why is it then we stray  
Around that sunken sill?  
They are all gone away.

And our poor fancy-play  
For them is wasted skill:  
There is nothing more to say.

There is ruin and decay  
In the House on the Hill:  
They are all gone away,  
There is nothing more to say.

*Edwin Arlington Robinson*

## INTERIOR

The little moths are creeping  
Across the cottage pane;  
On the floor the chickens gather,  
And they make talk and complain.

And she sits by the fire  
Who has reared so many men;  
Her voice is low like the chickens'  
With the things she says again.





## PLACES

“The sons that come back do be restless,  
They search for the thing to say;  
Then they take thought like the swallows,  
And the morrow brings them away.

“In the old, old days, upon Innish,  
The fields were lucky and bright,  
And if you lay down you’d be covered  
By the grass of one soft night.”

She speaks and the chickens gather,  
And they make talk and complain,  
While the little moths are creeping  
Across the cottage pane.

*Padraic Colum*

### WHERE THE WOOD-THRUSH CALLS

Somewhere Jack-in-the-pulpit stands,  
Master of all he sees,  
Where the checkering shadows wander down,  
Under the forest trees,  
And marshalled ferns in their brave array  
Are guarding patiently  
The cool green moss that has ne’er been trod  
In the place that waits for me.

The roar of the city grows faint and low  
As I list to the silence deep,  
To the call of the wood-thrush fairy clear  
Where the trees their shadows keep.  
The heat and the struggle are far away,  
And I stand for a moment free,  
As I breathe the breath of the chiming brook  
In the place that waits for me.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Perhaps when the labor all is done  
I may come to my kingdom fair;  
Perhaps through the years of shade and sun  
It will always wait me there;  
But I know the violets still will bloom  
With never an eye to see,  
And the wood-thrush call with none to hear  
In the place that waits for me.

Here in the strife my comrades toil  
Where the prisoning walls are high,  
Where the noonday glares on the burning street,  
And the people surging by.  
I would they could hear the chiming brook,  
I would that their eyes could see  
The shadows dance on the woodland moss  
In the place that waits for me.

*Jessie Wallace Hughan*

## THE HAYLOFT

Through all the pleasant meadow-side  
The grass grew shoulder-high,  
Till the shining scythes went far and wide  
And cut it down to dry.

Those green and sweetly smelling crops  
They led in waggons home;  
And they piled them here in mountain tops  
For mountaineers to roam.

Here is Mount Clear, Mount Rusty-Nail,  
Mount Eagle and Mount High; —  
The mice that in these mountains dwell,  
No happier are than I!

## PLACES

Oh, what a joy to clamber there,  
Oh, what a place to play,  
With the sweet, the dim, the dusty air,  
The happy hills of hay!

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

## KEEPSAKE MILL

Over the borders, a sin without pardon,  
Breaking the branches and crawling below,  
Out through the breach in the wall of the garden,  
Down by the banks of the river, we go.

Here is the mill with the humming of thunder,  
Here is the weir with the wonder of foam,  
Here is the sluice with the race running under —  
Marvellous places, though handy to home!

Sounds of the village grow stiller and stiller,  
Stiller the note of the birds on the hill;  
Dusty and dim are the eyes of the miller,  
Deaf are his ears with the moil<sup>1</sup> of the mill.

Years may go by, and the wheel in the river  
Wheel as it wheels for us, children, to-day,  
Wheel and keep roaring and foaming for ever  
Long after all of the boys are away.

Home from the Indies and home from the ocean,  
Heroes and soldiers we all shall come home;  
Still we shall find the old mill wheel in motion,  
Turning and churning that river to foam.

<sup>1</sup> *Moil*: noisy labor, drudgery.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

You with the bean that I gave when we quarrelled,  
I with your marble of Saturday last,  
Honoured and old and all gaily apparelled,  
Here we shall meet and remember the past.

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

## FULL MOON

*(Santa Barbara)*

I listened, there was not a sound to hear  
In the great rain of moonlight pouring down,  
The eucalyptus trees were carved in silver,  
And a light mist of silver lulled the town.

I saw far off the gray Pacific bearing  
A broad white disk of flame,  
And on the garden-walk a snail beside me  
Tracing in crystal the slow way he came.

*Sara Teasdale*

## STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

The little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

## PLACES

The woods are lovely dark and deep.  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

*Robert Frost*

## A BROOK IN THE CITY

The farm house lingers, though averse to square  
With the new city street it has to wear  
A number in. But what about the brook  
That held the house as in an elbow-crook?  
I ask as one who knew the brook, its strength  
And impulse, having dipped a finger length  
And made it leap my knuckle, having tossed  
A flower to try its currents where they crossed.  
The meadow grass could be cemented down  
From growing under pavements of a town;  
The apple trees be sent to hearth-stone flame.  
Is water wood to serve a brook the same?  
How else dispose of an immortal force  
No longer needed? Staunch it at its source  
With cinder loads dumped down? The brook was thrown  
Deep in a sewer dungeon under stone  
In fetid darkness still to live and run—  
And all for nothing it had ever done  
Except forget to go in fear perhaps.  
No one would know except for ancient maps  
That such a brook ran water. But I wonder  
If from its being kept forever under,  
These thoughts may not have risen that so keep  
This new-built city from both work and sleep.

*Robert Frost*





*CHILDREN*



## CHILDREN

### A BABY'S FEET

A baby's feet, like sea-shells pink,  
Might tempt, should heaven see meet,  
An angel's lips to kiss, we think,  
A baby's feet.

Like rose-hued sea-flowers toward the heat  
They stretch and spread and wink  
Their ten soft buds that part and meet.

No flower-bells that expand and shrink  
Gleam half so heavenly sweet,  
As shine on life's untrodden brink  
A baby's feet.

*A. C. Swinburne*

### A BABY'S EYES

A baby's eyes, ere speech begin,  
Ere lips learn words or sighs,  
Bless all things bright enough to win  
A baby's eyes.

Love, while the sweet thing laughs and lies  
And sleep flows out and in,  
Sees perfect in them Paradise!

Their glance might cast out pain and sin,  
Their speech make dumb the wise,  
By mute glad godhead felt within  
A baby's eyes.

*A. C. Swinburne*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

“ONE, TWO, THREE!”

It was an old, old, old, old lady,  
And a boy that was half-past three;  
And the way that they played together  
Was beautiful to see.

She couldn't go romping and jumping,  
And the boy no more could he;  
For he was a thin little fellow,  
With a thin little twisted knee.

They sat in the yellow sunlight,  
Out under the maple tree;  
And the game they played I'll tell you,  
Just as it was told to me.

It was Hide-and-Go-Seek they were playing,  
Though you'd never have known it to be —  
With an old, old, old, old lady,  
And a boy with a twisted knee.

The boy would bend his face down  
On his little sound right knee,  
And he guessed where she was hiding  
In guesses One, Two, Three.

“You are in the china closet!”  
He would laugh and cry with glee —  
It wasn't the china closet,  
But he still had Two and Three.

“You are up in papa's big bedroom,  
In the chest with the queer old key!”  
And she said: “You are *warm* and *warmer*;  
But you are not quite right,” said she.

## CHILDREN

"It can't be the little cupboard  
Where mamma's things used to be —  
So it must be in the little clothes-press, gran'ma,"  
And he found her with his Three.

Then she covered her face with her fingers,  
That were wrinkled and white and wee,  
And she guessed where the boy was hiding,  
With a One and a Two and a Three.

And they never had stirred from their places  
Right under the maple tree —  
This old, old, old, old lady  
And the boy with the lame little knee —  
This dear, dear, dear, dear old lady,  
And the boy who was half-past three.

*Henry Cuyler Bunner*

## THE DESIRE

Give me no mansions ivory white  
Nor palaces of pearl and gold;  
Give me a child for all delight,  
Just four years old.

Give me no wings of rosy shine  
Nor snowy raiment, fold on fold,  
Give me a little boy all mine,  
Just four years old.

Give me no gold and starry crown  
Nor harps, nor palm branches unrolled;  
Give me a nestling head of brown,  
Just four years old.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Give me a cheek that's like the peach,  
Two arms to clasp me from the cold;  
And all my heaven's within my reach,  
Just four years old.

Dear God, You give me from Your skies  
A little paradise to hold,  
As Mary once her Paradise,  
Just four years old.

*Katherine Tynan*

## BIBLE STORIES

The room was low and small and kind;  
And in its cupboard old,  
The shells were set out to my mind;  
The cups I loved with rims of gold.

Then, with that good gift which she had,  
My mother showed at will,  
David, the ruddy Syrian lad,  
With his few sheep upon a hill;

A shop down a rude country street,  
The chips strewn on the floor,  
And faintly keen across the heat;  
The simple kinsfolk at the door;

Mary amid the homely din,  
As slim as violet;  
The little Jesus just within,  
About His father's business set.

My mother rose, and then I knew  
As she stood smiling there,  
Her gown was of that gentle blue  
Which she had made the Virgin wear.

## CHILDREN

How fair the very chairs were grown!

The gilt rose on each back

Into a Syrian rose was blown,

And not our humble gold and black.

That week long, in our acres old,

Lad David did I see;

From out our cups with rims of gold,

The little Jesus supped with me.

*Lizette Woodworth Reese*

### THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

Between the dark and the daylight,

When the night is beginning to lower,

Comes a pause in the day's occupations,

That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me

The patter of little feet,

The sound of a door that is opened,

And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,

Descending the broad hall-stair,

Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,

And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:

Yet I know by their very eyes

They are plotting and planning together

To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,

A sudden raid from the hall!

By three doors left unguarded

They enter my castle wall!



## THIS SINGING WORLD

They climb up into my turret  
O'er the arms and back of my chair;  
If I try to escape, they surround me;  
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,  
Their arms about me entwine,  
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen  
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,  
Because you have scaled the wall,  
Such an old mustache as I am  
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,  
And will not let you depart,  
But put you down in the dungeon  
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,  
Yes, forever and a day,  
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,  
And moulder in dust away.

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

## A CHILD'S PRAYER

*(Ex Ore Infantium)*

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy  
Once, and just so small as I?  
And what did it feel like to be  
Out of Heaven, and just like me?  
Didst Thou sometimes think of *there*,

## CHILDREN

And ask where all the angels were?

I should think that I would cry

For my house all made of sky;

I would look about the air,

And wonder where my angels were;

And at waking 'twould distress me —

Not an angel there to dress me!

Hadst Thou ever any toys,

Like us little girls and boys?

And didst Thou play in Heaven with all

The angels, that were not too tall,

With stars for marbles? Did the things

Play *Can you see me?* through their wings?

Didst Thou kneel at night to pray,

And didst Thou join Thy hands, this way?

And did they tire, sometimes, being young?

And make the prayer seem very long?

And dost Thou like it best, that we,

Should join our hands to pray to Thee?

(I used to think, before I knew,

The prayer not said unless we do.)

And did Thy Mother at the night

Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right?

And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,

Kissed, and sweet, and Thy prayers said?

Thou canst not have forgotten all

That it feels like to be small:

And Thou know'st I cannot pray

To Thee in my father's way —

When Thou wast so little, say

Could'st Thou talk Thy Father's way? —

So, a little Child, come down

## THIS SINGING WORLD

And hear a child's tongue like Thy own;  
Take me by the hand and walk,  
And listen to my baby-talk.  
To Thy Father show my prayer  
(He will look, Thou art so fair),  
And say: "O Father, I, Thy Son,  
Bring the prayer of a little one."

And He will smile, that children's tongue  
Has not changed since Thou wast young!

*Francis Thompson*

## A CHILD UPON THE STAIR

Now when I stand upon the stair alone  
And listen, I can hear a quiet stir  
Like even breathing, or a whispered drone,  
A sound that any little noise would blur.  
I know that there is something in this hall,  
That climbs the waiting stairs and then goes down  
On silent feet, or clings hard to the wall,  
As though it loved the old and faded brown.  
Sometimes I feel that I, myself, can fly  
If I stand very still upon the stair,  
Believing that there is no reason why  
I cannot trust my body to the air. . . .  
Do other children find their stairs so near  
To things that grown-ups say cannot be here?

*Carolyn Hall*

# CHILDREN

## MOON-CHILDREN

When with fingers all uncertain, tiny stars have torn the  
curtain

And are peering down the avenue of dreams;

When the night is soft and tender, then the moon is in his  
splendor

And his silver brothers swim in all the streams.

And he looks into the valleys, into city-streets and alleys,

But no beauty matches his in any place;

Till into the small rooms creeping, he beholds the babies  
sleeping —

And for shame he draws a cloud before his face!

*Michael Lewis*

## THE DAUGHTER AT EVENING

Before her supper where she sits

With every favored toe she plays,

Singing whatever ballad fits

The past romances of her days.

The dusk comes softly to her room,

The night winds in the branches stir;

That nations battle to their doom

Across the seas, is naught to her.

For what she does not know, she eats,

A worm, a twig, a block, a fly,

And every novel thing she meets

Is bitten into bye and bye.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

She, from the blankets of her bed,  
Holds no opinion on the war,  
But munches on her thumb instead,  
This being what a thumb is for.

The troubles that invade the day,  
On some remote tomorrow creep;  
Comes Bertha with the supper tray,  
And — now I laymen down ee beep.

*Robert Nathan*

## THE YOUNG MYSTIC

We sat together close and warm,  
My little tired boy and I —  
Watching across the evening sky  
The coming of the storm.

No rumblings rose, no thunders crashed,  
The west-wind scarcely sang aloud;  
But from a huge and solid cloud  
The summer lightnings flashed.

And then he whispered " Father, watch;  
I think God's going to light His moon — "  
" And when, my boy " . . . " Oh, very soon.  
I saw Him strike a match! "

*Louis Untermeyer*

## THE LAND OF STORY-BOOKS

At evening when the lamp is lit,  
Around the fire my parents sit;  
They sit at home and talk and sing,  
And do not play at anything.

## CHILDREN

Now, with my little gun, I crawl  
All in the dark along the wall,  
And follow round the forest track  
Away behind the sofa back.

There, in the night, where none can spy,  
All in my hunter's camp I lie,  
And play at books that I have read  
Till it is time to go to bed.

These are the hills, these are the woods,  
These are my starry solitudes;  
And there the river by whose brink  
The roaring lions come to drink.

I see the others far away  
As if in firelit camp they lay,  
And I, like to an Indian scout,  
Around their party prowled about.

So, when my nurse comes in for me,  
Home I return across the sea,  
And go to bed with backward looks  
At my dear land of story-books.

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

## MUMPS

I had a feeling in my neck,  
And on the sides were two big bumps;  
I couldn't swallow anything  
At all because I had the mumps.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

And Mother tied it with a piece,  
And then she tied up Will and John,  
And no one else but Dick was left  
That didn't have a mump rag on.

He teased at us and laughed at us,  
And said, whenever he went by,  
"It's vinegar and lemon-drops  
And pickles!" just to make us cry.

But Tuesday Dick was very sad  
And cried because his neck was sore,  
And not a one said sour things  
To anybody any more.

*Elizabeth Madox Roberts*

## A RECOLLECTION

My father's friend came once to tea.  
He laughed and talked. He spoke to me.  
But in another week they said  
That friendly pink-faced man was dead.  
"How sad . . ." they said, "the best of men."  
So said I too, "How sad"; but then  
Deep in my heart I thought with pride,  
"I know a person who has died!"

*Frances Cornford*

## WHAT IS THE GRASS?

A child said What is the grass? fetching it to me with full  
hands;  
How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is  
any more than he.

## CHILDREN

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.

Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,  
A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropped,  
Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners, that we  
may see and remark and say *Whose?*

*Walt Whitman*

## BABY TOES

There is a blue star, Janet,  
Fifteen years' ride from us,  
If we ride a hundred miles an hour.

There is a white star, Janet,  
Forty years' ride from us,  
If we ride a hundred miles an hour.

Shall we ride  
To the blue star  
Or the white star?

*Carl Sandburg*

## HELGA

The wishes on this child's mouth  
Came like snow on marsh cranberries;  
The tamarack kept something for her;  
The wind is ready to help her shoes.  
The north has loved her; she will be  
A grandmother feeding geese on frosty  
Mornings; she will understand  
Early snow on the cranberries  
Better and better then.

*Carl Sandburg*



# THIS SINGING WORLD

FOR ARVIA

*(On Her Fifth Birthday)*

You Eyes, you large and all-inquiring Eyes,  
That look so dubiously into me,  
And are not satisfied with what you see,  
Tell me the worst and let us have no lies;  
Tell me the secret of your scrutinies,  
And of myself. Am I a Mystery?  
Am I a Boojum — or just Company?  
What do you say? What do you think, You Eyes?  
You say not; but you think, beyond a doubt;  
And you have the whole world to think about,  
With very little time for little things.  
So let it be; and let it all be fair —  
For you, and for the rest who cannot share  
Your gold of unrevealed awakenings.

*Edwin Arlington Robinson*

## TIRED TIM

Poor tired Tim! It's sad for him.  
He lags the long bright morning through,  
Ever so tired of nothing to do;  
He moons and mopes the livelong day,  
Nothing to think about, nothing to say;  
Up to bed with his candle to creep,  
Too tired to yawn, too tired to sleep:  
Poor tired Tim! It's sad for him.

*Walter De la Mare*

## CHILDREN

### GODFREY GORDON GUSTAVUS GORE

Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore —

No doubt you have heard the name before —

Was a boy who never would shut a door!

The wind might whistle, the wind might roar,

And teeth be aching and throats be sore,

But still he never would shut the door.

His father would beg, his mother implore,

“ Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,

We really *do* wish you would shut the door! ”

Their hands they wrung, their hair they tore;

But Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore

Was deaf as the buoy out at the Nore.

When he walked forth the folks would roar,

“ Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,

Why don't you think to shut the door? ”

They rigged out a Shutter with sail and oar,

And threatened to pack off Gustavus Gore

On a voyage of penance to Singapore.

But he begged for mercy, and said, “ No more!

Pray do not send me to Singapore

On a Shutter, and then I will shut the door! ”

“ You will? ” said his parents; “ then keep on shore!

But mind you do! For the plague is sore

Of a fellow that never will shut the door,

Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore! ”

*William Brighty Rands*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### MINNIE, MATTIE AND MAY

Minnie and Mattie  
And fat little May,  
Out in the country,  
Spending a day.

Such a bright day,  
With the sun glowing,  
And the trees half in leaf,  
And the grass growing.

Pinky white pigling  
Squeals through his snout,  
Woolly white lambkin  
Frisks all about.

Cluck! cluck! the nursing-hen  
Summons her flock, —  
Ducklings all downy soft,  
Yellow as yolk.

Cluck! cluck! the nursing-hen  
Summons her chickens  
To peck the dainty bits  
Found in her pickings.

Minnie and Mattie  
And May carry posies,  
Half of sweet violets,  
Half of primroses.

Give the sun time enough,  
Glowing and glowing,  
He'll rouse the roses  
And bring them blowing.

## CHILDREN

Don't wait for roses,  
Losing to-day,  
O Minnie, Mattie,  
And wise little May.

Violets and primroses  
Blossom to-day  
For Minnie and Mattie  
And fat little May.

*Christina Georgiana Rossetti*

## LEETLA GIUSEPPINA

Joe Baratta's Giuseppina  
She's so cute as she can be;  
Justa com' here from Messina,  
Weeth da resta family.  
Joe had money in da banka —  
He been savin' for a year —  
An' he breeng hees wife, Bianca,  
An' da three small chidren here.  
First ees baby, Catarina,  
Nexta Paolo (w'at you call  
Een da Inglaice langwadge "Paul"),  
An' da smartest wan of all —  
Giuseppina!

Giuseppina justa seven,  
But so smart as she can be;  
Wida-wake at night-time even,  
Dere's so mooch dat's strange to see.  
W'at you theenk ees mos' surprise her?  
No; ees not da buildin's tall;

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Eef, my frand, you would be wisa  
You mus' theenk of som'theeng small.  
Eet's an ant! W'en first she seena  
Wan o' dem upon da ground,  
How she laughed an' danced around:  
"O! 'Formica,' he has found  
Giuseppina! "

"O! " she cried to heem, "Formica"  
(Dat's Italian name for heem),  
"How you getta here so queecka?  
For I know you no can sweem;  
An' you was not on da sheepa,  
For I deed not see you dere.  
How you evva mak' da treeepa?  
Only birds can fly een air.  
How you gat here from Messina?  
O! at las' I ondrastand!  
You have dugga through da land  
Jus' to find your leetla frand,  
Giuseppina! "

*T. A. Daly*

## TO DICK, ON HIS SIXTH BIRTHDAY<sup>1</sup>

Tho' I am very old and wise,  
And you are neither wise nor old,  
When I look far into your eyes,  
I know things I was never told:

<sup>1</sup> From *Rivers to the Sea* by Sara Teasdale. Copyright, 1915, by the Macmillan Company.

## CHILDREN

I know how flame must strain and fret  
Prisoned in a mortal net;  
How joy with over-eager wings,  
Bruises the small heart where he sings;  
How too much life, like too much gold,  
Is sometimes very hard to hold. . . .  
All that is talking — but I know  
This much is true, six years ago  
An angel living near the moon  
Walked thru the sky and sang a tune  
Plucking stars to make his crown —  
And suddenly two stars fell down,  
Two falling arrows made of light.  
Six years ago this very night  
I saw them fall and wondered why  
The angel dropped them from the sky —  
But when I saw your eyes I knew  
The angel sent the stars to you.

*Sara Teasdale*

## TEN YEARS OLD

A city child, rooms are to him no mere  
Places to live in. Each one has a clear  
Color and character of its own. His toys  
And tumbled books made the small bed-room seem  
The place to build a practicable dream.  
He likes the brilliant parlor and enjoys  
Nothing so much as bringing other boys  
To romp among the delicate furniture,  
And brush within an inch of ivories, lamps,  
And other things not held by iron clamps,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Like chinese vases, neatly insecure.  
His father's library with its heavy tone  
Seldom detains him, for he has his own.  
Hé views the kitchen with a hungry eye  
And loafs about it, nibbling on the stray  
Dry crumbs of gossip that may drop his way,  
Standing so innocently inattentive. Sly  
And with a squirrel's curiosity,  
Careless of barred or sacred corners, he  
Hunts back of shelves until he finds the key  
With which to open bureau-drawers and pry  
Into forbidden desks and cupboards — there  
Are scores of mysteries forbidden, new,  
And so well hidden, they need looking through.  
But most of all he likes the bath-room where  
The panel mirror shows his four feet two,  
Where, with a towel or bath-robe, he can strike  
A hundred attitudes not only like  
His printed heroes but the gods themselves.  
Stripping himself he dreams and dances there,  
The pink embodiment of Peter Pan.  
Or changing to an older superman  
He turns to Siegfried brandishing his sword  
And Jason snatching at the Golden Fleece.  
The figures crowd around him and increase:  
Now he is David battling for the Lord,  
Mixing his battle-cries with psalms of peace.  
Now he is Mowgli, at the cobra's hoard  
With black Bagheera. Swiftly he has drawn  
Excalibur from its invisible sheath.  
He is Ulysses on his native heath,  
Tristram, Tom Sawyer and Bellerophon;  
Cadmus about to sow the dragon's teeth;

## CHILDREN

The shining Parsifal who knew no sin;  
Sir Launcelot and Huckleberry Finn;  
George Washington and Captain Hook and Thor;  
Hansel awaking in the magic wood;  
Frank Merriwell, John Silver, Robin Hood —  
He is all these and half a hundred more.  
He scowls and strides, he utters harsh commands;  
Great armies follow him to new-born lands,  
Battling for treasures lost or glories gone.  
None can withstand the thunder of his frown;  
His eye is terrible; the walls go down.  
Cries of the conquered mingle with the cheers.  
While through the clash and battle-smoke he hears —  
“*Richard! Get through! And put your stockings on!*”

*Louis Untermeyer*







*OTHER PEOPLE*



## OTHER PEOPLE

### SEUMAS BEG

A man was sitting underneath a tree  
Outside the village, and he asked me what  
Name was upon this place, and said that he  
Was never here before. He told a lot  
Of stories to me too. His nose was flat.  
I asked him how it happened, and he said  
The first mate of the Mary Ann done that  
With a marlin-spike one day, but he was dead,  
And jolly good job too; and he'd have gone  
A long way to have killed him, and he had  
A gold ring in one ear; the other one  
"Was bit off by a crocodile, bedad."  
That's what he said. He taught me how to chew.  
He was a real nice man. He liked me, too.

*James Stephens*

### MISS T.

It's a very odd thing —  
As odd as can be —  
That whatever Miss T. eats  
Turns into Miss T.;  
Porridge and apples,  
Mince, muffins and mutton,  
Jam, junket, jumbles —  
Not a rap, nor a button  
It matters; the moment  
They're out of her plate,  
Though shared by Miss Butcher  
And sour Mr. Bate;

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Tiny and cheerful,  
And neat as can be,  
Whatever Miss T. eats  
Turns into Miss T.

*Walter De la Mare*

### MR. WELLS

On Sunday morning, then he comes  
To church, and everybody smells  
The blacking and the toilet soap  
And camphor balls from Mr. Wells.

He wears his whiskers in a bunch,  
And wears his glasses on his head  
I mustn't call him Old Man Wells —  
No matter — that's what Father said.

And when the little blacking smells  
And camphor balls and soap begin,  
I do not have to look to know  
That Mr. Wells is coming in.

*Elizabeth Madox Roberts*

### BILL PETERS

Bill Peters was a hustler  
From Independence town;  
He warn't a college scholar  
Nor man of great renown,  
But Bill had a way o' doin' things  
An' doin' 'em up brown.

## OTHER PEOPLE

Bill druv the stage from Independence  
Up to the Smokey Hill;  
An' everybody knowed him thar  
As Independence Bill —  
That warn't no feller on the route  
That druv with half the skill.

Bill druv four pair of horses,  
Same as you'd drive a team,  
An' you'd think you was a-travelin'  
On a railroad druv by steam;  
An' he'd git thar on time, you bet,  
Or Bill 'ud bust a seam.

He carried mail an' passengers,  
An' he started on the dot,  
An' them teams o' his'n, so they say,  
Was never known to trot;  
But they went it in a gallop  
An' kept their axles hot.

When Bill's stage 'ud bust a tire,  
Or something 'ud break down,  
He'd hustle round an' patch her up  
An' start off with a bound;  
An' the wheels o' that old shack o' his  
Scarce ever touched the ground.

An' Bill didn't 'low no foolin',  
An' when Injuns hove in sight,  
An' bullets rattled at the stage,  
He druv with all his might.  
He'd holler, " Fellers give 'em hell!  
I ain't got time to fight."

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Then the way them wheels 'ud rattle,  
An' the way the dust 'ud fly,  
You'd think a million cattle  
Had stampeded an' gone by.  
But the mail 'ud get thar just the same,  
If the horses had to die!

He druv the stage for many a year  
Along the Smokey Hill,  
An' a pile o' wild Comanches  
Did Bill Peters have to kill —  
An' I reckon if he'd had got luck  
He'd be a drivin' still.

But he chanced one day to run agin  
A bullet made o' lead,  
Which was harder than he bargained for  
An' now poor Bill is dead;  
An' when they brung his body home  
A barrel o' tears was shed.

*American Cowboy Ballad*

(Collected by John A. Lomax)

## FATHER WILLIAM

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,  
"And your hair has become very white;  
And yet you incessantly stand on your head —  
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,  
"I feared it might injure the brain;  
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,  
Why, I do it again and again."

## OTHER PEOPLE

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,  
And have grown most uncommonly fat;  
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door —  
Pray, what is the reason for that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his gray locks,  
"I kept all my limbs very supple  
By the use of this ointment — one shilling the box —  
Allow me to sell you a couple."

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too  
weak  
For anything tougher than suet;  
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak;  
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,  
And argued each case with my wife;  
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw  
Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose  
That your eye was as steady as ever;  
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose —  
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions and that is enough,"  
Said his father; "don't give yourself airs!  
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?  
Be off, or I'll kick you downstairs!"

*Lewis Carroll*



## THIS SINGING WORLD

### MOTHER

I have praised many loved ones in my song,  
And yet I stand  
Before her shrine, to whom all things belong,  
With empty hand.

Perhaps the ripening future holds a time  
For things unsaid;  
Not now; men do not celebrate in rhyme  
Their daily bread.

*Theresa Helburn*

### THE WATCHER

She always leaned to watch for us,  
Anxious if we were late,  
In winter by the window,  
In summer by the gate;  
And though we mocked her tenderly,  
Who had such foolish care,  
The long way home would seem more safe  
Because she waited there.

Her thoughts were all so full of us,  
She never could forget!  
And so I think that where she is  
She must be watching yet,

Waiting till we come home to her,  
Anxious if we are late —  
Watching from Heaven's window,  
Leaning from Heaven's gate.

*Margaret Widdemer*

## OTHER PEOPLE

### THE SHEPHERDESS

She walks — the lady of my delight —  
A shepherdess of sheep.  
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;  
She guards them from the steep;  
She feeds them on the fragrant height,  
And folds them in for sleep.  
She roams maternal hills and bright,  
Dark valleys safe and deep.  
Into that tender breast at night  
The chastest stars may peep.  
She walks — the lady of my delight —  
A shepherdess of sheep.  
She holds her little thoughts in sight,  
Though gay they run and leap.  
She is so circumspect and right;  
She has her soul to keep.  
She walks — the lady of my delight —  
A shepherdess of sheep.

*Alice Meynell*

### THE OLD LADY

The old, old lady  
that nobody knows  
sits in the garden  
shelter and sews.  
Save for her restless  
fingers she  
is cold and still  
as ivory.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

The chestnut-blossom  
blown on her dress  
seems only a sculptor's  
cleverness.

*Humbert Wolfe*

### THE LAST LEAF

I saw him once before,  
As he passed by the door,  
And again  
The pavement stones resound,  
As he totters o'er the ground  
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,  
Ere the pruning-knife of Time  
Cut him down,  
Not a better man was found  
By the Crier on his round  
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,  
And he looks at all he meets  
Sad and wan,  
And he shakes his feeble head.  
That it seems as if he said,  
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest  
On the lips that he has prest  
In their bloom,  
And the names he loved to hear

## OTHER PEOPLE

Have been carved for many a year  
On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said —  
Poor old lady, she is dead

Long ago —  
That he had a Roman nose,  
And his cheek was like a rose  
In the snow.

But now his nose is thin,  
And it rests upon his chin  
Like a staff,  
And a crook is in his back,  
And a melancholy crack  
In his laugh.

I know it is a sin  
For me to sit and grin  
At him here;  
But the old three-cornered hat,  
And the breeches, and all that,  
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be  
The last leaf upon the tree  
In the spring,  
Let them smile, as I do now,  
At the old forsaken bough  
Where I cling.

*Oliver Wendell Holmes*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THE RUNNER

On a flat road runs the well-train'd runner,  
He is lean and sinewy with muscular legs,  
He is thinly clothed, he leans forward as he runs,  
With lightly closed fists and arms partially rais'd.

*Walt Whitman*

## PORTRAIT BY A NEIGHBOR

Before 'she has her floor swept  
Or her dishes done,  
Any day you'll find her  
A-sunning in the sun!

It's long after midnight  
Her key's in the lock,  
And you never see her chimney smoke  
Till past ten o'clock.

She digs in her garden  
With a shovel and a spoon  
She weeds her lazy lettuce  
By the light of the moon,

She walks up the walk  
Like a woman in a dream,  
She forgets she borrowed butter  
And pays you back cream!

Her lawn looks like a meadow,  
And if she mows the place  
She leaves the clover standing  
And the Queen Anne's lace!

*Edna St. Vincent Millay*

## OTHER PEOPLE

### IN PRAISE OF JOHNNY APPLESEED

(Born 1775. Died 1847)

#### I. OVER THE APPALACHIAN BARRICADE

\*

In the days of President Washington, The glory of the nations, Dust and ashes, Snow and sleet, And hay and oats and wheat, Blew west, Crossed the Appalachians, Found the glades of rotting leaves, the soft deer-pastures, The farms of the far-off future In the forest. Colts jumped the fence, Snorting, ramping, snapping, sniffing, With gastronomic calculations, Crossed the Appalachians, The east walls of our citadel, And turned to gold-horned unicorns, Feasting in the dim farms of the forest. Stripedest, kickingest kittens escaped, Caterwauling "Yankee Doodle Dandy," Renounced their poor relations, Crossed the Appalachians, And turned to tiny tigers In the humorous forest. Chickens escaped From farmyard congregations Crossed the Appalachians, And turned to amber trumpets	<i>To be read like old leaves on the elm tree of Time. Sifting soft winds with sentence and rhyme.</i>
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## THIS SINGING WORLD

On the ramparts of our Hoosiers' nest and citadel,  
Millennial heralds  
Of the foggy, mazy forest.  
Pigs broke loose, scrambled west,  
Scorned their loathsome stations,  
Crossed the Appalachians,  
Turned to roaming, foaming wild boars  
Of the forest.  
The smallest, blindest puppies toddled west  
While their eyes were coming open,  
And, with misty observations,  
Crossed the Appalachians,  
Barked, barked, barked  
At the glow-worms and the marsh lights and the light-  
ning-bugs,  
And turned to ravening wolves  
Of the forest.  
Crazy parrots and canaries flew west,  
Drunk on May-time revelations,  
Crossed the Appalachians,  
And turned to delirious, flower-dressed fairies  
Of the lazy forest.  
Haughtiest swans and peacocks swept west,  
And, despite soft derivations,  
Crossed the Appalachians,  
And turned to blazing warrior souls  
Of the forest,  
Singing the ways  
Of the Ancient of Days.  
And the "Old Continentals  
In their ragged regimentals,"  
With bard's imaginations,  
Crossed the Appalachians.

## OTHER PEOPLE

And  
A boy  
Blew west  
And with prayers and incantations,  
And with "Yankee Doodle Dandy,"  
Crossed the Appalachians,  
And was "young John Chapman,"  
Then  
"Johnny Appleseed, Johnny Appleseed,"  
Chief of the fastnesses, dappled and vast,  
In a pack on his back,  
In a deer-hide sack,  
The beautiful orchards of the past,  
The ghosts of all the forests and the groves -  
In that pack on his back,  
In that talisman sack,  
To-morrow's peaches, pears and cherries,  
To-morrow's grapes and red raspberries,  
Seeds and tree souls, precious things,  
Feathered with microscopic wings,  
All the outdoors the child heart knows,  
And the apple, green, red, and white,  
Sun of his day and his night —  
The apple allied to the thorn,  
Child of the rose.  
Porches untrod of forest houses  
All before him, all day long,  
"Yankee Doodle" his marching song;  
And the evening breeze  
Joined his psalms of praise  
As he sang the ways  
Of the Ancient of Days.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Leaving behind august Virginia,  
Proud Massachusetts, and proud Maine,  
Planting the trees that would march and train  
On, in his name to the great Pacific,  
Like Birnam wood to Dunsinane,  
Johnny Appleseed swept on,  
Every shackle gone,  
Loving every sloshy brake,  
Loving every skunk and snake,  
Loving every leathery weed,  
Johnny Appleseed, Johnny Appleseed,  
Master and ruler of the unicorn-ramping forest,  
The tiger-mewing forest,  
The rooster-trumpeting, boar-foaming, wolf-ravening forest,  
The spirit-haunted, fairy-enchanted forest,  
Stupendous and endless,  
Searching its perilous ways  
In the name of the Ancient of Days.

### II. THE INDIANS WORSHIP HIM, BUT HE HURRIES ON

Painted kings in the midst of the clearing  
Heard him asking his friends the eagles  
To guard each planted seed and seedling.  
Then he was a god, to the red man's dreaming;  
Then the chiefs brought treasures grotesque and fair,—  
Magical trinkets and pipes and guns,  
Beads and furs from their medicine-lair,—  
Stuck holy feathers in his hair,  
Hailed him with austere delight,  
The orchard god was their guest through the night.

## OTHER PEOPLE

While the late snow blew from bleak Lake Erie,  
Scourging rock and river and reed,  
All night long they made great medicine  
For Jonathan Chapman,  
Johnny Appleseed,  
Johnny Appleseed;  
And as though his heart were a wind-blown wheatsheaf,  
As though his heart were a new-built nest,  
As though their heaven house were his breast,  
In swept the snow-birds singing glory.  
And I hear his bird heart beat its story,  
Hear yet how the ghost of the forest shivers,  
Hear yet the cry of the gray, old orchards,  
Dim and decaying by the rivers,  
And the timid wings of the bird-ghosts beating,  
And the ghosts of the tom-toms beating, beating.

But he left their wigwams and their love. *While you read,*  
By the hour of dawn he was proud and *hear the hoof-*  
stark, *beats of deer in*  
*the snow.*  
Kissed the Indian babes with a sigh, *And see, by*  
*their track,*  
Went forth to live on roots and bark, *bleeding foot-*  
*prints we know.*  
Sleep in the trees, while the years howled by —

Calling the catamounts by name,  
And buffalo bulls no hand could tame,  
Slaying never a living creature,  
Joining the birds in every game,  
With the gorgeous turkey gobblers mocking,  
With the lean-necked eagles boxing and shouting;  
Sticking their feathers in his hair, —  
Turkey feathers,  
Eagle feathers, —

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Trading hearts with all beasts and weathers  
He swept on, winged and wonder-crested,  
Bare-armed, barefooted, and bare-breasted.

The maples, shedding their spinning seeds,  
Called to his appleseeds in the ground,  
Vast chestnut-trees, with their butterfly nations,

*While you read,  
see conventions  
of deer go by.  
The bucks toss  
their horns, the  
fuzzy fawns fly.*

Called to his seeds without a sound.  
And the chipmunk turned a "summerset,"  
And the foxes danced the Virginia reel;  
Hawthorne and crab-thorn bent, rain-wet,  
And dropped their flowers in his night-black hair;  
And the soft fawns stopped for his perorations;  
And his black eyes shone through the forest-gleam,  
And he plunged young hands into new-turned earth,  
And prayed dear orchard boughs into birth;  
And he ran with the rabbit and slept with the stream.  
And so for us he made great medicine,  
And so for us he made great medicine,  
In the days of President Washington.

### III. JOHNNY APPLESEED'S OLD AGE

Long, long after,  
When settlers put up beam and rafter,  
They asked of the birds: "Who gave this  
fruit?  
Who watched this fence till the seeds took  
root?  
Who gave these boughs?" They asked the  
sky,  
And there was no reply.

*To be read like  
faint hoof-beats  
of fawns long  
gone.  
From respectable  
pasture, and  
park and lawn,  
And heart-beats  
of fawns that  
are coming again  
When the for-  
est, once more,  
is the master of  
men.*

## OTHER PEOPLE

But the robin might have said,  
"To the farthest West he has followed the sun,  
His life and his empire just begun."

Self-scourged, like a monk, with a throne for wages,  
Stripped like the iron-souled Hindu sages,  
Draped like a statue, in strings like a scarecrow,  
His helmet-hat an old tin pan,  
But worn in the love of the heart of man,  
Hairy Ainu, wild man of Borneo, Robinson Crusoe —  
Johnny Appleseed;  
And the robin might have said,  
"Sowing, he goes to the far, new West,  
With the apple, the sun of his burning breast —  
The apple allied to the thorn,  
Child of the rose."

Washington buried in Virginia,  
Jackson buried in Tennessee,  
Young Lincoln, brooding in Illinois,  
And Johnny Appleseed, priestly and free,  
Knotted and gnarled, past seventy years,  
Still planted on in the woods alone.  
Ohio and young Indiana —  
These were his wide altar-stone,  
Where still he burnt out flesh and bone.

Twenty days ahead of the Indian, twenty years ahead of  
the white man,  
At last the Indian overtook him, at last the Indian hur-  
ried past him;  
At last the white man overtook him, at last the white  
man hurried past him;

## THIS SINGING WORLD

At last his own trees overtook him, at last his own trees  
hurried past him.

Many cats were tame again,  
Many ponies tame again,  
Many pigs were tame again,  
Many canaries tame again;  
And the real frontier was his sun-burnt breast.

From the fiery core of that apple, the earth,  
Sprang apple-amaranths divine.  
Love's orchards climbed to the heavens of the West,  
And snowed the earthly sod with flowers.  
Farm hands from the terraces of the blest  
Danced on the mists with their ladies fine  
And Johnny Appleseed laughed with his dreams,  
And swam once more the ice-cold streams.  
And the doves of the spirit swept through the hours,  
With doom-calls, love-calls, death-calls, dream-calls;  
And Johnny Appleseed, all that year,  
Lifted his hands to the farm-filled sky,  
To the apple-harvesters busy on high;  
And so once more his youth began,  
And so for us he made great medicine —  
Johnny Appleseed, medicine-man.

Then

The sun was his turned-up broken barrel,  
Out of which his juicy apples rolled,  
Down the repeated terraces,  
Thumping across the gold,  
An angel in each apple that touched the forest mold,  
A ballot-box in each apple,  
A state capital in each apple,

## OTHER PEOPLE

Great high schools, great colleges,  
All America in each apple,  
Each red, rich, round, and bouncing moon  
That touched the forest mold.  
Like scrolls and rolled-up flags of silk,  
He saw the fruits unfold,  
And all our expectations in one wild-flower written dream,  
Confusion and death-sweetness, and a thicket of crab-  
          thorns,  
Heart of a hundred midnights, heart of the merciful morns.  
Heaven's boughs bent down with their alchemy,  
Perfumed airs, and thoughts of wonder.  
And the dew on the grass and his own cold tears  
Were one in brooding mystery,  
Though death's loud thunder came upon him,  
Though death's loud thunder struck him down —  
The boughs and the proud thoughts swept through the  
          thunder,  
Till he saw our wide nation, each State a flower,  
Each petal a park for holy feet,  
With wild fawns merry on every street,  
With wild fawns merry on every street,  
The vista of ten thousand years, flower-lighted and com-  
          plete.

Hear the lazy weeds murmuring, bays and rivers whisper-  
          ing,  
From Michigan to Texas, California to Maine;  
Listen to the eagles, screaming, calling,  
"Johnny Appleseed, Johnny Appleseed,"  
There by the doors of old Fort Wayne.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

In the four-poster bed Johnny Appleseed built,  
Autumn rains were the curtains, autumn leaves were the  
quilt.

He laid him down sweetly, and slept through the night,  
Like a bump on a log, like a stone washed white,  
There by the doors of old Fort Wayne.

*Vachel Lindsay*

*BIRDS AND BEASTS*





# BIRDS AND BEASTS

## THE RUNAWAY

Once, when the snow of the year was beginning to fall,  
We stopped by a mountain pasture to say "Whose colt?"  
A little Morgan had one forefoot on the wall,  
The other curled at his breast. He dipped his head  
And snorted to us. And then he had to bolt.  
We heard the miniature thunder where he fled  
And we saw him or thought we saw him dim and gray,  
Like a shadow against the curtain of falling flakes.  
"I think the little fellow's afraid of the snow.  
He isn't winter-broken. It isn't play  
With the little fellow at all. He's running away.  
I doubt if even his mother could tell him, "Sakes,  
It's only weather." He'd think she didn't know.  
Where is his mother? He can't be out alone."  
And now he comes again with a clatter of stone  
And mounts the wall again with whited eyes  
And all his tail that isn't hair up straight.  
He shudders his coat as if to throw off flies.  
"Whoever it is that leaves him out so late,  
When other creatures have gone to stall and bin,  
Ought to be told to come and take him in."

*Robert Frost*

## THE RABBIT

When they said the time to hide was mine,  
I hid back under a thick grape vine.  
And while I was still for the time to pass,  
A little gray thing came out of the grass.  
He hopped his way through the melon bed  
And sat down close by a cabbage head.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

He sat down close where I could see,  
And his big still eyes looked hard at me,

His big eyes bursting out of the rim,  
And I looked back very hard at him.

*Elizabeth Madox Roberts*

## THE KERRY COW

It's in Connacht in Munster that yourself might travel  
wide,  
And be asking all the herds you'd meet along the country-  
side,  
But you'd never meet a one could show the likes of her  
till now,  
Where she's grazing in a Leinster field — my little Kerry  
cow.

If herself went to the cattle fairs she'd put all cows to  
shame,  
For the finest poets of the land would meet to sing her  
fame;  
And the young girls would be asking leave to stroke her  
satin coat,  
They'd be praising and caressing her, and calling her a  
dote.

If the King of Spain gets news of her he'll fill his purse  
with gold,  
And set sail to ask the English King where she is to be  
sold.  
But the King of Spain may come to me, a crown upon  
his brow.

It is he may keep his golden purse — and I my Kerry cow.

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

The priest maybe will tell her fame to the Holy Pope of  
Rome,  
And the Cardinals' College send for her to leave her Irish  
home;  
But it's heart-broke she would be itself to cross the Irish  
sea,  
'Twould be best they'd send a blessing to my Kerry cow  
and me.

When the Ulster men hear tell of her, they'll come with  
swords an' pikes,  
For it's civil war there'll be no less if they should see her  
likes,  
And you'll read it on the paper of the bloody fight there's  
been,  
An' the Orangemen they're burying in fields of Leinster  
green.

There are red cows that's contrary, and there's white cows  
quare and wild,  
But my Kerry cow is biddable, an' gentle as a child.  
You may rare up kings and heroes on the lovely milk she  
yields,  
For she's fit to foster generals to fight our battlefields.

In the histories they'll be making they've a right to put  
her name  
With the horse of Troy and Oisin's hounds and other  
beasts of fame.  
And the painters will be painting her beneath the haw-  
thorn bough  
Where she's grazing on the good green grass — my little  
Kerry cow.

*W. M. Letts*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### CUSHY COW

Cushy cow has curly horns,  
Delicate, tipped with brown.  
Swifter her hoofs fly backward  
Than any bull's in town.

We milk her into great white pails  
And crocks of cottage blue,  
And her leavings run all over the yard —  
Yet our milking is never through!

I found her at smoky twilight  
By the well of the pale primrose,  
Where grey elves hung on her haunches  
And nuzzled her grazing nose.

*Laura Benét*

### A COW AT SULLINGTON

She leaves the puddle where she drinks,  
And comes toward the roadway bar  
And looks into our eyes, and thinks  
What curious animals we are!

*Charles Dalmon*

### A CATERPILLAR'S APOLOGY FOR EATING A FAVORITE GLADIOLUS

Confuse me not with impious things;  
But wait for the appointed hour  
When you shall see your vanished flower  
Reborn resplendent in my wings!

*Charles Dalmon*

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

### THE CATERPILLAR

Under this loop of honeysuckle,  
A creeping, coloured caterpillar,  
I gnaw the fresh green hawthorn spray,  
I nibble it leaf by leaf away.

Down beneath grow dandelions,  
Daisies, old-man's-looking-glasses;  
Rooks flap croaking across the lane.  
I eat and swallow and eat again.

Here come raindrops helter-skelter;  
I munch and nibble unregarding:  
Hawthorn leaves are juicy and firm.  
I'll mind my business: I'm a good worm.

When I'm old, tired, melancholy,  
I'll build a leaf-green mausoleum  
Close by, here on this lovely spray,  
And die and dream the ages away.

Some say worms win resurrection,  
With white wings beating flitter-flutter,  
But wings or a sound sleep, why should I care?  
Either way I'll miss my share.

Under this loop of honeysuckle,  
A hungry, hairy caterpillar,  
I crawl on my high and swinging seat,  
And eat, eat, eat — as one ought to eat.

*Robert Graves*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### THE MOCKING BIRD

*Hear! hear! hear!*

Listen! the word

Of the mocking-bird!

*Hear! hear! hear!*

*I will make all clear;*

*I will let you know*

*Where the footfalls go*

*That through the thicket and over the hill*

*Allure, allure.*

How the bird-voice cleaves

Through the web of leaves

With a leap and a thrill

Like the flash of a weaver's shuttle, swift and sudden and  
sure!

And lo, he is gone — even while I turn

The wisdom of his runes to learn.

He knows the mystery of the wood,

The secret of the solitude;

But he will not tell, he will not tell,

For all he promises so well.

*Richard Hovey*

### THE BLACKBIRD

The nightingale has a lyre of gold,

The lark's is a clarion call,

And the blackbird plays but a boxwood flute,

But I love him best of all.

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

For his song is all of the joy of life,  
And we in the mad, spring weather,  
We two have listened till he sang  
Our hearts and lips together.

*W. E. Henley*

### THE BLACKBIRD

In the far corner  
close by the swings,  
every morning  
a blackbird sings.

His bill's so yellow,  
his coat's so black,  
that he makes a fellow  
whistle back.

Ann, my daughter,  
thinks that he  
sings for us two  
especially.

*Humbert Wolfe*

### THE KINGFISHER

It was the Rainbow gave thee birth,  
And left thee all her lovely hues;  
And, as her mother's name was Tears,  
So runs it in thy blood to choose  
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep  
In company with trees that weep.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Go you and, with such glorious hues,  
Live with proud Peacocks in green parks;  
On lawns as smooth as shining glass,  
Let every feather show its mark;  
Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings  
Before the windows of proud kings.

Nay, lovely Bird, thou art not vain;  
Thou hast no proud ambitious mind;  
I also love a quiet place  
That's green, away from all mankind;  
A lonely pool, and let a tree  
Sigh with her bosom over me.

*W. H. Davies*

## CHICKADEE<sup>1</sup>

The chickadee in the appletree  
Talks all the time very gently.  
He makes me sleepy.  
I rock away to the sea-lights.  
Far off I hear him talking  
The way smooth bright pebbles  
Drop into water . . .  
Chick-a-dee-dee-dee. . . .

*Hilda Conkling*

*(Written at the age of six)*

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted by permission from *Poems by A Little Girl* by Hilda Conkling. Copyright, 1920, by Frederick A. Stokes Company.

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

### TO A SPARROW

Because you have no fear to mingle  
Wings with those of greater part  
So like me, with song I single  
Your sweet impudence of heart.

And, when prouder feathers go where  
Summer holds her leafy show,  
You still come to us from nowhere,  
Like grey leaves across the snow.

In back ways where odd and end go  
To your meals you drop down sure,  
Knowing every broken window  
Of the hospitable poor.

There is no bird half so harmless,  
None so sweetly rude as you,  
None so common and so charmless,  
None of virtues nude as you.

But for all your faults I love you,  
For you linger with us still,  
Though the wintry winds reprove you,  
And the snow is on the hill.

*Francis Ledwidge*

### HOMING SWALLOWS

Swift swallows sailing from the Spanish main,  
O rain-birds racing merrily away  
From hill-tops parched with heat and sultry plain  
Of wilting plants and fainting flowers, say —

## THIS SINGING WORLD

When at the noon-hour from the chapel school  
The children dash and scamper down the dale,  
Scornful of teacher's rod and binding rule  
Forever broken and without avail,

Do they still stop beneath the giant tree  
To gather locusts in their childish greed,  
And chuckle when they break the pods to see  
The golden powder clustered round the seed?

*Claude McKay*

## THE WASP

When the ripe pears droop heavily,  
The yellow wasp hums loud and long  
His hot and drowsy autumn song:  
A yellow flame he seems to be,  
When darting suddenly from high  
He lights where fallen peaches lie.

Yellow and black — this tiny thing's  
A tiger-soul on elfin wings.

*William Sharp*

## FIREFLIES

Little lamps of the dusk.  
You fly low and gold  
When the summer evening  
Starts to unfold,  
So that all the insects,  
Now, before you pass,  
Will have light to see by  
Undressing in the grass.





## BIRDS AND BEASTS

But when night has flowered  
    Little lamps a-gleam,  
You fly over tree-tops  
    Following a dream.  
Men wonder from their windows  
    That a firefly goes so far —  
They do not know your longing  
    To be a shooting star.

*Carolyn Hall*

## DOLPHINS IN BLUE WATER

Hey! Crackerjack — jump!  
Blue water,  
Pink water,  
Swirl, flick, flitter;  
Snout into a wave-trough,  
Plunge, curl.  
Bow over,  
Under,  
Razor-cut and tumble.  
Roll, turn —  
Straight — and shoot at the sky,  
All rose-flame drippings.  
Down ring,  
Drop,  
Nose under,  
Hoop,  
Tail,  
Dive,  
And gone;  
With smooth over-swirlings of blue water,  
Oil-smooth cobalt,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Slipping, liquid lapis lazuli,  
Emerald shadings,  
Tintings of pink and ochre.  
Prismatic slidings  
Underneath a windy sky.

*Amy Lowell*

### CAT'S MEAT

Ho, all you cats in all the street;  
Look out, it is the hour of meat:  
The little barrow is crawling along,  
And the meat-boy growling his fleshy song.  
Hurry, Ginger! Hurry, White!  
Don't delay to court or fight.  
Wandering Tabby, vagrant Black,  
Yamble from adventure back!  
Slip across the shining street,  
Meat! Meat! Meat! Meat!  
Lift your tail and dip your feet;  
Find your penny — Meat! Meat!  
Where's your mistress; learn to purr:  
Pennies emanate from her.  
Be to her, for she is Fate,  
Perfectly affectionate.  
(You, domestic Pinkie-Nose,  
Keep inside and warm your toes.)  
Flurry, flurry in the street —  
Meat! Meat! Meat! Meat!

*Harold Monro*

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

### THE AMBITIOUS MOUSE

If all the world were candy  
And the sky were frosted cake,  
Oh, it would be a splendid job  
For a mouse to undertake!

To eat a path of sweetmeats  
Through candy forest aisles —  
Explore the land of Pepper-mint  
Stretched out for miles and miles.

To gobble up a cloudlet,  
A little cup-cake star,  
To swim a lake of liquid sweet  
With shores of chocolate bar.

But best of all the eating,  
Would be the toothsome fat,  
Triumphant hour of mouse-desire,  
To eat a candy cat!

*John Farrar*

### AT NIGHT

On moony nights the dogs bark shrill  
Down the valley and up the hill.

There's one is angry to behold  
The moon so unafraid and cold,  
Who makes the earth as bright as day,  
But yet unhappy, dead, and gray.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Another in his strawy lair  
Says: "Who's a-howling over there?  
By heavens I will stop him soon  
From interfering with the moon!"

So back he barks, with throat upthrown:  
"You leave our moon, our moon alone!"  
And other distant dogs respond  
Beyond the fields, beyond, beyond. . . .

*Frances Cornford*

### DA PUP EEN DA SNOW

Deed you evra see Joy  
Gona wild weeth delight,  
Jus' so lika small boy  
W'en som' brighta new toy  
Mak's heem crazy excite',  
You would know w'at I mean  
Eef you jus' coulda seen —  
Not so long time ago —  
How my leetla fat pup  
Ees first play een da snow.

O! I scream an' I roar  
An' so shaka weeth laughtra,  
Dat my sides dey are sore  
For mos' three-four days aftra.  
An' how mooch I would try,  
I no speak weeth sooch skeell  
I could put een your eye  
W'at ees fresh een mine steell:  
How dat leetla pup romp  
All aroun' da whole place,

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

How he bark, how he jump  
An' fall down on hees face;  
How he fight, how he bite  
An' ees tumble aroun',  
Teel hees cover' weeth white  
Lik a leetla fat clown;  
W'at su'prise fill hees eyes  
W'en he see da flakes sail,  
How he bark at da skies,  
How he chasa hees tail.

O! I weesh I could show  
How ees looka, dat pup,  
How he puff an' he blow  
W'en hees leecked by da snow  
An' ees gotta geeve up.  
An' I sposa, no doubt,  
You would say I am fibbin'  
W'en I say hees tongue's out  
Lika yarda peenk ribbon —  
O! how mooch I would try,  
I no speak weeth sooch skeell  
I could put een your eye  
W'at's so fresh een mine steell.  
But I weesh you had been  
Where you, too, coulda seen  
W'at delighta me so —  
How my leetla fat pup  
Ees first play een da snow!

*T. A. Daly*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THE GRASSHOPPER <sup>1</sup>

The Grasshopper, the Grasshopper,

I will explain to you: —

He is the Brownies' racehorse,

The fairies' Kangaroo.

*Vachel Lindsay*

## CHANTICLEER

Of all the birds from East to West

That tuneful are and dear,

I love that farmyard bird the best,

They call him Chanticleer.

*Gold plume and copper plume,*

*Comb of scarlet gay;*

*'Tis he that scatters night and gloom,*

*And whistles back the day!*

He is the sun's brave herald

That, ringing his blithe horn,

Calls round a world dew-pearled

The heavenly airs of morn.

O clear gold, shrill and bold!

He calls through creeping mist

The mountains from the night and cold

To rose and amethyst.

<sup>1</sup> From *The Congo and Other Poems* by Vachel Lindsay. Copyright, 1914, by The Macmillan Company.

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

He sets the birds to singing,  
And calls the flowers to rise;  
The morning cometh, bringing  
Sweet sleep to heavy eyes.

*Gold plume and silver plume,  
Comb of coral gay;  
'Tis he packs off the night and gloom,  
And summons home the day!*

Black fear he sends it flying,  
Black care he drives afar;  
And creeping shadows sighing  
Before the morning star.

The birds of all the forest  
Have dear and pleasant cheer,  
But yet I hold the rarest  
The farmyard Chanticleer.

*Red cock or black cock,  
Gold cock or white,  
The flower of all the feathered flock;  
He whistles back the light!*

*Katherine Tynan*

### RED ROOSTER <sup>1</sup>

Red rooster in your gray coop,  
O stately creature with tail-feathers red and blue,  
Yellow and black,  
You have a comb gay as a parade

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted by permission from *Poems by a Little Girl* by Hilda Conkling. Copyright, 1920, by Frederick A. Stokes Company.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

On your head:

You have pearl trinkets

On your feet:

The short feathers smooth along your back

Are the dark color of wet rocks,

Or the rippled green of ships

When I look at their sides through water.

I don't know how you happened to be made

So proud, so foolish,

Wearing your coat of many colors,

Shouting all day long your crooked words,

Loud . . . sharp . . . not beautiful!

*Hilda Conkling*

*(Written at the age of seven)*

## THE HENS

The night was coming very fast;

It reached the gate as I ran past.

The pigeons had gone to the tower of the church

And all the hens were on their perch,

Up in the barn, and I thought I heard

A piece of a little purring word.

I stopped inside, waiting and staying,

To try to hear what the hens were saying.

They were asking something, that was plain,

Asking it over and over again.

One of them moved and turned around,

Her feathers made a ruffled sound,

## BIRDS AND BEASTS

A ruffled sound, like a bushful of birds,  
And she said her little asking words.

She pushed her head close into her wing,  
But nothing answered anything.

*Elizabeth Madox Roberts*





*FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS*





# *FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS*

## THE FAIRIES

Up the airy mountain,  
Down the rushy glen,  
We daren't go a-hunting  
For fear of little men;  
Wee folk, good folk,  
Trooping all together;  
Green jacket, red cap,  
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore  
Some make their home,  
They live on crispy pancakes  
Of yellow tide-foam;  
Some in the reeds  
Of the black mountain lake,  
With frogs for their watch-dogs,  
All night awake.

High on the hill-top  
The old King sits;  
He is now so old and gray,  
He's nigh lost his wits.  
With a bridge of white mist  
Columbkil he crosses  
On his stately journeys  
From Slieveleague to Rosses;

Or going up with music  
On cold, starry nights,  
To sup with the Queen  
Of the gay Northern Lights.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

They stole little Bridget  
For seven years long;  
When she came down again  
Her friends were all gone.  
They took her lightly back,  
Between the night and morrow,  
They thought that she was fast asleep,  
But she was dead with sorrow.  
They have kept her ever since  
Deep within the lake,  
On a bed of flag leaves,  
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,  
Through the mosses bare,  
They have planted thorn-trees  
For pleasure here and there.  
Is any man so daring  
As dig them up in spite,  
He shall find their sharpest thorns  
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,  
Down the rushy glen,  
We daren't go a-hunting  
For fear of little men;  
Wee folk, good folk,  
Trooping all together;  
Green jacket, red cap,  
And white owl's feather!

*William Allingham*

# FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS

## THE FAIRIES

There are fairies at the bottom of our garden!

It's not so very, very far away;

You pass the gardener's shed and you just keep straight  
ahead —

I do so hope they've really come to stay.

There's a little wood, with moss in it and beetles,

And a little stream that quietly runs through;

You wouldn't think they'd dare to come merry-making  
there —

Well, they do.

There are fairies at the bottom of our garden!

They often have a dance on summer nights;

The butterflies and bees make a lovely little breeze,

And the rabbits stand about and hold the lights.

Did you know that they could sit upon the moonbeams

And pick a little star to make a fan,

And dance away up there in the middle of the air?

Well, they can.

There are fairies at the bottom of our garden!

You cannot think how beautiful they are;

They all stand up and sing when the Fairy Queen and King

Come gently floating down upon their car.

The King is very proud and *very* handsome;

The Queen — now can you guess who that could be

(She's a little girl all day, but at night she steals away)?

Well — it's Me!

*Rose Fyleman*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## FAIRY-MUSIC

When fiddlers play their tunes, you may sometimes hear,  
Very softly chiming in, magically clear,  
Magically high and sweet, the tiny crystal notes  
Of fairy voices bubbling free from tiny fairy throats.

When the birds at break of day chant their morning prayers,  
Or on sunny afternoons pipe ecstatic airs,  
Comes an added rush of sound to the silver din —  
Songs of fairy troubadours gaily joining in.

When athwart the drowsy fields summer twilight falls,  
Through the tranquil air there float elfin madrigals,  
And in wild November nights, on the winds astride,  
Fairy hosts go rushing by, singing as they ride.

Every dream that mortals dream, sleeping or awake,  
Every lovely fragile hope — these the fairies take,  
Delicately fashion them and give them back again  
In tender, limpid melodies that charm the hearts of men.

*Rose Fyleman*

## I'D LOVE TO BE A FAIRY'S CHILD

Children born of fairy stock  
Never need for shirt or frock,  
Never want for food or fire,  
Always get their heart's desire:  
Jingle pockets full of gold,  
Marry when they're seven years old.  
Every fairy child may keep  
Two strong ponies and ten sheep;  
All have houses, each his own,

## FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS

Built of brick or granite stone;  
They live on cherries, they run wild —  
I'd love to be a Fairy's child.

*Robert Graves*

### IN FAIRYLAND

The fairy poet takes a sheet  
Of moonbeam, silver white;  
His ink is dew from daisies sweet,  
His pen a point of light.  
My love I know is fairer far  
Than his, (though she is fair,)  
And we should dwell where fairies are —  
For I could praise her there.

*Joyce Kilmer*

### SUPPOSE

Suppose . . . and suppose that a wild little Horse of  
Magic  
Came cantering out of the sky,  
With bridle of silver and into the saddle I mounted  
To fly — and to fly.  
And we stretched up into the air, fleeting on in the sun-  
shine,  
A speck in the gleam  
On galloping hoofs, his mane in the wind out-flowing,  
As if in a dream.  
Suppose and suppose, when the gentle star of evening  
Came crinkling into the blue,  
A magical castle we saw in the air, like a cloud of moon-  
light,  
As onward we flew.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

And across the green moat on the drawbridge we foamed  
and we snorted,

And there was a beautiful Queen  
Who smiled at me strangely; and spoke to my wild little  
Horse, too  
A lovely and beautiful Queen.

Suppose and suppose she cried to her delicate maidens,  
“ Behold my daughter — my dear! ”  
And they crowned me with flowers, and then on their harps  
sate playing,  
Solemn and clear.

And magical cakes and goblets were spread on the table;  
And at the window the birds came in;  
Hopping along with bright eyes, pecking crumbs from the  
platters,  
And sipped of the wine.

And splashing up — up to the roof, tossed fountains of  
crystal;  
And Princes in scarlet and green  
Shot with their bows and arrows, and kneeled with their  
dishes  
Of fruits for the Queen.

And we walked in a magical garden with rivers and bowers,  
And my bed was of ivory and gold;  
And the Queen breathed soft in my ear a song of en-  
chantment,  
And I never grew old . . .

And I never, never came back to the earth, oh, never and  
never;  
How mother would cry and cry.

## FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS

There'd be snow on the fields then, and all these sweet  
flowers in the winter

Would wither and die . . .

Suppose . . . and suppose . . .

*Walter De la Mare*

### THE SHADOW PEOPLE

Old lame Bridget doesn't hear  
Fairy music in the grass  
When the gloaming's on the mere  
And the shadow people pass;  
Never hears their slow, grey feet  
Coming from the village street  
Just beyond the parson's wall,  
Where the clover globes are sweet  
And the mushroom's parasol  
Opens in the moonlit rain.  
Every night I hear them call  
From their long and merry train.  
Old lame Bridget says to me,  
"It is just your fancy, child."  
She cannot believe I see  
Laughing faces in the wild,  
Hands that twinkle in the sedge  
Where the finny minnows quiver,  
Shaping on a blue wave's ledge  
Bubble foam to sail the river.  
And the sunny hands to me  
Beckon ever, beckon ever.  
Oh! I would be wild and free  
And with the shadow people be.

*Francis Ledwidge.*



# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THE SATYRS AND THE MOON

Within the wood behind the hill  
The moon got tangled in the trees.  
Her splendor made the branches thrill  
And thrilled the breeze.

The satyrs in the grotto bent  
Their heads to see the wondrous sight.  
"It is a god in banishment  
That stirs the night!"

The little satyr looked and guessed:  
"It is an apple that one sees,  
Brought from that garden of the West,  
Hesperides."

"It is a cyclops' glaring eye."  
"A temple dome from Babylon."  
"A Titan's cup of victory."  
"A little sun."

The tiny satyr jumped for joy,  
And kicked his hoofs in utmost glee.  
"It is a wondrous silver toy —  
Bring it to me!"

A great wind whistled through the blue  
And caught the moon and tossed it high;  
A bubble of pale fire it flew  
Across the sky.

The satyrs gasped and looked and smiled,  
And wagged their heads from side to side,  
Except their shaggy little child,  
Who cried and cried.

*Herbert S. Gorman*





# FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS

## HOW TO CATCH UNICORNS

Its cloven hoofprint on the sand  
Will lead you — where?  
Into a phantasmagoric land —  
Beware!

There all the bright streams run up-hill.  
The birds on every tree are still.  
But from stocks and stones, clear voices come  
That should be dumb.

If you have taken along a net,  
A noose, a prod,  
You'll be waiting in the forest yet . . .  
*Nid — nod!*

In a virgin's lap the beast slept sound,  
*They say . . . but I —*  
I think (Is anyone around?)  
*That's just a lie!*

If you have taken a musketoon  
To flinders 'twill flash 'neath the wizard moon.  
So I should take browned batter-cake,  
Hot-buttered inside, like foam to flake.

And I should take an easy heart  
And a whimsical face,  
And a tied-up lunch of sandwich and tart,  
And spread a cloth in the open chase.

And then I should pretend to snore . . .  
And I'd hear a snort and I'd hear a roar,  
The wind of a mane and a tail, and four

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Wild hoofs prancing the forest-floor.  
And I'd open my eyes on a flashing horn —  
And see the Unicorn!

Paladins fierce and virgins sweet . . .  
*But he's never had anything to eat!*  
Knights have tramped in their iron-mong'ry . . .  
But nobody thought — that's all! — *he's hungry!*

### ADDENDUM

*Really hungry!* Good Lord deliver us,  
The Unicorn is not *carnivorous!*

*William Rose Benét*

## THE ELF AND THE DORMOUSE

Under a toadstool  
Crept a wee Elf,  
Out of the rain  
To shelter himself.

Under the toadstool,  
Sound asleep,  
Sat a big Dormouse  
All in a heap.

Trembled the wee Elf,  
Frightened, and yet  
Fearing to fly away  
Lest he got wet.

To the next shelter —  
Maybe a mile!  
Sudden the wee Elf  
Smiled a wee smile.

## FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS

Tugged till the toadstool  
Toppled in two.  
Holding it over him,  
Gaily he flew.  
Soon he was safe home,  
Dry as could be.  
Soon woke the Dormouse —  
“ Good gracious me!  
“ Where is my toadstool? ”  
Loud he lamented.  
And that’s how umbrellas  
First were invented.

*Oliver Herford*

### LITTLE ORPHANT ANNIE <sup>1</sup>

Little Orphant Annie’s come to our house to stay,  
An’ wash the cups and saucers up, an’ brush the crumbs  
away,  
An’ shoo the chickens off the porch, an’ dust the hearth,  
an’ sweep,  
An’ make the fire, an’ bake the bread, an’ earn her board-  
an’-keep;  
An’ all us other children, when the supper things is done,  
We set around the kitchen fire an’ has the mostest fun  
A-lis’nin’ to the witch-tales ’at Annie tells about,  
An’ the Gobble-uns ’at gits you  
Ef you  
Don’t  
Watch  
Out!

<sup>1</sup> From *Rhymes of Childhood* by James Whitcomb Riley. Copyright, 1890. Used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Onc't they was a little boy wouldn't say his pray'rs —  
An' when he went to bed at night, away up stairs,  
His mammy heerd him holler, an' his daddy heard him  
    bawl,  
An' when they turn't the kivvers down, he wasn't there  
    at all!  
An' they seeked him in the rafter-room, an' cubby-hole,  
    an' press,  
An' seeked him up the chimney-flue, an' ever'wheres, I  
    guess;  
But all they ever found was thist his pants an' round-  
    about!  
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you  
    Ef you  
        Don't  
        Watch  
        Out!

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin,  
An' make fun of ever'one, an' all her blood-an'-kin;  
An' onc't when they was "company," an' ole folks was  
    there,  
She mocked 'em an' shocked 'em, an' said she didn't care!  
An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an' hide,  
They was two great big Black Things a-standin' by her side,  
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore she knowed  
    what she's about!  
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you  
    Ef you  
        Don't  
        Watch  
        Out!  
[ 174 ]

## FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,  
An' the lampwick sputters, an' the wind goes woo-oo!  
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray,  
An' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away,—  
You better mind yer parents, and yer teachers fond and  
    dear,

An' cherish them 'at loves you, an' dry the orphant's tear,  
An' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at clusters all about,  
Er the Gobble-uns 'll git you

    Ef you  
        Don't  
        Watch  
        Out!

*James Whitcomb Riley*

## THE MERMAID

### I

Who would be  
A mermaid fair,  
Singing alone,  
Combing her hair  
Under the sea,  
In a golden curl  
With a comb of pearl,  
On a throne?

### II

I would be a mermaid fair;  
I would sing to myself the whole of the day;  
With a comb of pearl I would comb my hair;



## THIS SINGING WORLD

And still as I comb'd I would sing and say,  
"Who is it loves me? who loves not me?"  
I would comb my hair till my ringlets would fall  
    Low adown, low adown,  
From under my starry sea-bud crown  
    Low adown, low adown,  
And I should look like a fountain of gold  
    Springing alone  
    With a shrill inner sound,  
    Over the throne  
    In the midst of the hall;  
Till the great sea-snake under the sea  
From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps  
Would slowly trail himself sevenfold  
Round the hall where I sate, and look in at the gate  
With his large calm eyes for the love of me.  
And all the mermen under the sea  
Would feel their immortality  
Die in their hearts for the love of me.

### · III

But at night I would wander away, away,  
    I would fling on each side my low-flowing locks,  
And lightly vault from the throne and play  
    With the mermen in and out of the rocks;  
We would run to and fro, and hide and seek,  
    On the broad seawolds in the crimson shells,  
Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea.  
But if any came near I would call, and shriek,  
And adown the steep like a wave I would leap  
    From the diamond-ledges that jut from the dells;  
For I would not be kiss'd by all who would list

## FAIRIES AND PHANTOMS

Of the bold merry mermen under the sea.  
They would sue me, and woo me, and flatter me,  
In the purple twilights under the sea;  
But the king of them all would marry me,  
Woo me, and win me, and marry me,  
In the branching jaspers under the sea.  
Then all the dry pied things that be  
In the hueless mosses under the sea  
Would curl round my silver feet silently,  
All looking up for the love of me.  
And if I should carol aloud, from aloft  
All things that are forked, and horned, and soft  
Would lean out from the hollow sphere of the sea,  
All looking down for the love of me.

*Alfred Tennyson*

## ADVENTURE

Black wave the trees in the forest  
And a rough wind hurries by,  
But the swineherd's toddling daughter  
Knows where fallen pine-cones lie.

And girt a snowy apron  
She scampers, alert and gay,  
To the hidden pool in the hollow  
Where the wan witch people play.

They smile, the wee wrinkled women,  
They creep to her pinafore;  
And lay in her lap strange treasures  
Trolls brought from the ocean's floor.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

And they marvel at her blonde tresses  
And braid them with scented fern;  
And they lave her dusty, brown ankles  
With snow water from the burn.

But nobody listens, or heeds them,  
The swineherd hews a new trail,  
The swineherd's wife in the cottage  
Pours the sour milk from the pail.

And little Gerta lags homeward  
Dream shod through the shadows deep;  
Her eyelids heavy with wonder —  
They whisper, "She's been asleep."

*Laura Benét*



*WORDS AND MUSIC*



## WORDS AND MUSIC

### ODE

We are the music-makers,  
And we are the dreamers of dreams,  
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,  
And sitting by desolate streams;  
World-losers and world-forsakers,  
On whom the pale moon gleams:  
Yet we are the movers and shakers  
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties  
We build up the world's great cities,  
And out of a fabulous story  
We fashion an empire's glory:  
One man with a dream, at pleasure,  
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;  
And three with a new song's measure  
Can trample an empire down.

We, in the ages lying,  
In the buried past of the earth,  
Built Nineveh with our sighing,  
And Babel itself with our mirth;  
And o'erthrew them with prophesying  
To the old of the new world's worth;  
For each age is a dream that is dying,  
Or one that is coming to birth.

*Arthur O'Shaughnessy*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## TO HELEN

Helen, thy beauty is to me  
Like those Nicaean barks of yore,  
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,  
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore  
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,  
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,  
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home  
To the glory that was Greece  
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche  
How statue-like I see thee stand,  
The agate lamp within thy hand!  
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which  
Are Holy Land!

*Edgar Allan Poe*

## A BIRTHDAY

My heart is like a singing bird  
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;  
My heart is like an apple tree  
Whose boughs are bent with thickest fruit;  
My heart is like a rainbow shell  
That paddles in a halcyon sea —  
My heart is gladder than all these,  
Because my love is come to me.







## WORDS AND MUSIC

Raise me a dais of silk and down,  
Hang it with vair<sup>1</sup> and purple dyes,  
Carve it in doves, and pomegranates,  
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;  
Work it in gold and silver grapes,  
In leaves, and silver fleurs-de-lys,  
Because the birthday of my life  
Is come, my love is come to me.

*Christina Georgiana Rossetti*

### THE CHERRY-BLOSSOM WAND

I will pluck from my tree a cherry-blossom wand,  
And carry it in my merciless hand,  
So I will drive you, so bewitch your eyes,  
With a beautiful thing that shall never grow wise.

Light are the petals that fall from the bough,  
And lighter the love that I offer you now;  
In a spring day shall the tale be told  
Of the beautiful things that will never grow old.

The blossoms shall fall in the night wind,  
And I will leave you so, to be kind:  
Eternal in beauty are short-lived flowers,  
Eternal in beauty, these exquisite hours.

I will pluck from my tree a cherry-blossom wand,  
And carry it in my merciless hand,  
So I will drive you, so bewitch your eyes,  
With a beautiful thing that shall never grow wise.

*Anna Wickham*

<sup>1</sup> *Vair*: variegated silver and blue.

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## SONG

(From "*The Land of Heart's Desire*")

The wind blows out of the gates of the day,  
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,  
And the lonely of heart is withered away,  
While the faeries dance in a place apart,  
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,  
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;  
  
For they hear the wind laugh, and murmur and sing  
Of a land where even the old are fair,  
And even the wise are merry of tongue;  
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,  
'When the wind has laughed and murmured and sung,  
'The lonely of heart is withered away.'

*William Butler Yeats*

## SONG

"Oh! Love," they said, "is King of Kings,  
And Triumph is his crown.  
Earth fades in flame before his wings,  
And Sun and Moon bow down." —  
But that, I knew, would never do;  
And Heaven is all too high.  
So whenever I meet a Queen, I said,  
I will not catch her eye.  
  
"Oh! Love," they said, and "Love," they said,  
"The gift of Love is this;  
A crown of thorns about thy head,

## WORDS AND MUSIC

And vinegar to thy kiss! " —  
But Tragedy is not for me;  
And I'm content to be gay.  
So whenever I spied a Tragic Lady,  
I went another way.

And so I never feared to see  
You wander down the street,  
Or come across the fields to me  
On ordinary feet.  
For what they'd never told me of,  
And what I never knew;  
It was that all the time, my love,  
Love would be merely you.  
*Rupert Brooke*

### PORTRAIT OF A GIRL

This is the shape of the leaf, and this of the flower,  
And this the pale bole of the tree  
Which watches its bough in a pool of unwavering water  
In a land we never shall see.

The thrush on the bough is silent, the dew falls softly,  
In the evening is hardly a sound.  
And the three beautiful pilgrims who come here together  
Touch lightly the dust of the ground,  
Touch it with feet that trouble the dust but as wings do,  
Come shyly together, are still,  
Like dancers who wait, in a pause of the music, for music  
The exquisite silence to fill. . . .

## THIS SINGING WORLD

This is the thought of the first, and this of the second,  
And this the grave thought of the third:

'Linger we thus for a moment, palely expectant,  
And silence will end, and the bird

'Sing the pure phrase, sweet phrase, clear phrase in the  
twilight

To fill the blue bell of the world;

And we, who on music so leaflike have drifted together,  
Leaflike apart shall be whirled

'Into what but the beauty of silence, silence forever?'. . .

. . . This is the shape of the tree,

And the flower, and the leaf, and the three pale beautiful  
pilgrims;

This is what you are to me.

*Conrad Aiken*

### "THE NIGHT WILL NEVER STAY"<sup>1</sup>

The night will never stay,

The night will still go by,

Though with a million stars

You pin it to the sky,

Though you bind it with the blowing wind

And buckle it with the moon,

The night will slip away

Like sorrow or a tune.

*Eleanor Farjeon*

<sup>1</sup> By permission from *Gypsy and Ginger* by Eleanor Farjeon.  
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## WORDS AND MUSIC

### HOW MANY TIMES

How many times do I love thee, dear?  
Tell me how many thoughts there be  
In the atmosphere  
Of a new-fall'n year,  
Whose white and sable hours appear  
The latest flake of Eternity;  
So many times do I love thee, dear.  
How many times do I love, again?  
Tell me how many beads there are  
In a silver chain  
Of the evening rain,  
Unravell'd from the tumbling main,  
And threading the eye of a yellow star:  
So many times do I love again.

*Thomas Lovell Beddoes*

### BLOW, BUGLE, BLOW

The splendor falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story;  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.  
O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear  
And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river;  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.  
*Alfred Tennyson*

## FOR THEM ALL

At night through the city in a song  
Like a cloud I drift along.  
  
I slip into the shop-girl's room,  
Soothing her eyes amid the gloom.  
  
I smooth the wrinkles on the cheek  
Of the white mother, worn and meek.  
  
Where the laborer sits at rest,  
I pour sweet dreams into his breast.  
  
The old man and the little child  
Bending o'er the page have smiled.  
  
Into the lover's heart I stream,  
Like the belovèd in a dream.  
  
The poet and the lover, too,  
I drench with beauty through and through.  
  
I am Beauty's, and I move  
Lonely amid those I love.  
  
O, poet, lover, mother, child!  
For love of you my heart is wild.

## WORDS AND MUSIC

Out of this very page I cry  
Up to your spirits: this is I!

Are we together here at last?  
O catch me up before 'tis past!

O hold me close against your breast!  
There alone, at last, I rest.

*John Hall Wheelock*

## NIRVANA

Sleep on, I lie at heaven's high oriels,  
Over the stars that murmur as they go  
Lighting your lattice-window far below —  
And every star some of the glory spells  
Whereof I know.

I have forgotten you, long, long ago,  
Like the sweet, silver singing of thin bells  
Vanished, or music fading faint and low.  
Sleep on, I lie at heaven's high oriels,  
Who loved you so.

*John Hall Wheelock*

## THE WORDS

Little Words that wear silk dresses  
And go to tea-parties:  
"How darling!" "How perfectly dear!"  
"You really did? . . . Marvelous!"  
When they come away,  
They take off their little silk mittens



## THIS SINGING WORLD

And fold up their poke bonnets.  
Then they are pansies and violets.  
And some carry fragrance  
Of mignonette in their pockets.

Out in the world are their cousins:

Tall Words that rise up like towers.  
Slender Words ticking the hours.  
Feather Words that mount seeds  
In the flower pods.  
Weather Words that count beads  
On the hour-rods.  
Merry Words that muse.  
Tarry Words that lose.  
Cloudy Words that send the rain.  
Rowdy Words that tend a pain.  
Linnet Words that seek a rare clime.  
Minute Words that keep a fair time.  
Morning Words that comb the hair high.  
Adorning Words that roam the air nigh.  
Wing Words that sing the little loves.  
Spring Words that bring the little doves.  
Mother Words that string the lyre.  
Brother Words that bring the fire.  
Willow Words that bind the nest.  
Pillow Words that find a rest.  
Long Words that bird the sleep.  
Song Words that herd the sheep.  
And when the fair "Good Night" is said,  
Some Words climb the stair  
And rhyme in turn to bed.

*Opal Whiteley*

## WORDS AND MUSIC

### LIGHT

The night has a thousand eyes,  
And the day but one;  
Yet the light of the bright world dies  
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,  
And the heart but one;  
Yet the light of a whole life dies  
When love is done.

*F. W. Bourdillon*

### AT THE SYMPHONY

The 'cellos, setting forth apart,  
Grumbled and sang, and so the day,  
From the low beaches of my heart,  
Turned in tranquility away.

And over weariness and doubt  
Rose up the horns like bellied sails,  
Like canvas of the soul flung out  
To rising and orchestral gales;

Passed on and left irresolute  
The ebony, the silver throat. . .  
Low over clarinet and flute  
Hung heaven upon a single note.

*Robert Nathan*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THE SINGER

If I had peace to sit and sing,  
Then I could make a lovely thing;  
But I am stung with goads and whips,  
So I build songs like iron ships.

Let it be something for my song,  
If it is sometimes swift and strong.

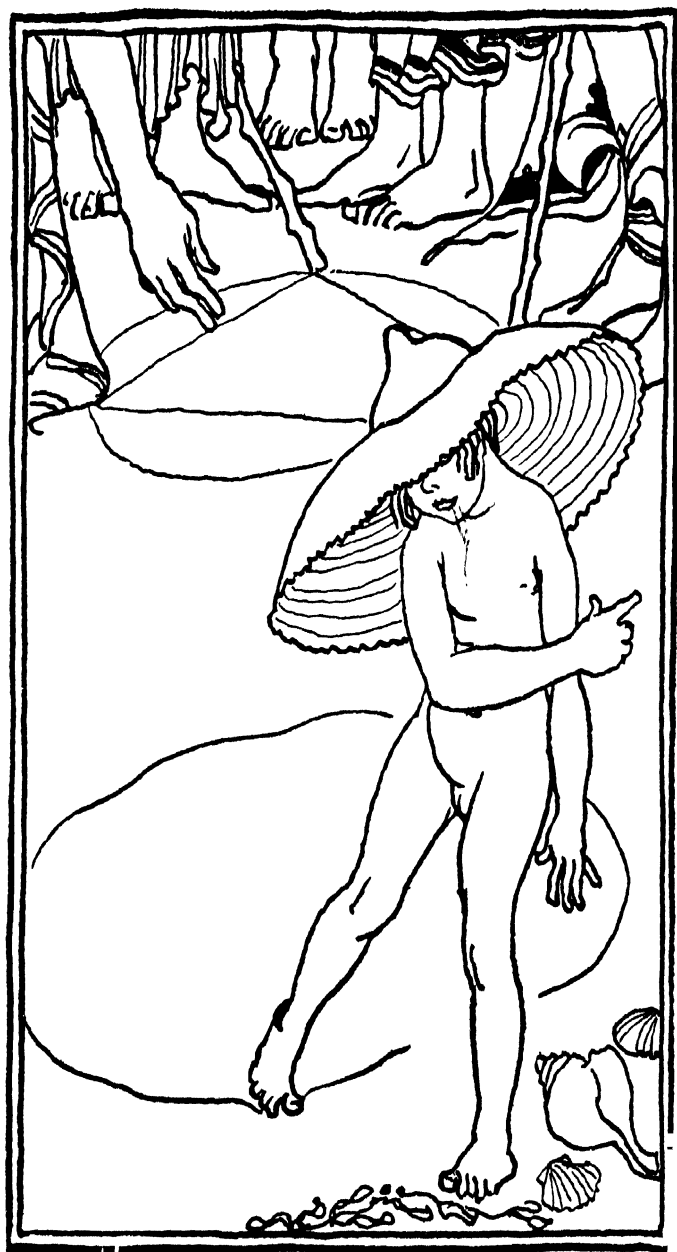
*Anna Wickham*



•

*WHIMS AND FANTASIES*

•



## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

### FOUR MOON POEMS<sup>1</sup>

#### EUCLID

Old Euclid drew a circle  
On a sand-beach long ago.  
He bounded and enclosed it  
With angles thus and so.  
His set of solemn greybeards  
Nodded and argued much  
Of arc and of circumference,  
Diameter and such.  
A silent child stood by them  
From morning until noon  
Because they drew such charming  
Round pictures of the moon.

#### WHAT THE RATTLESNAKE SAID

The moon's a little prairie-dog.  
He shivers through the night.  
He sits upon his hill and cries  
For fear that I will bite.

The sun's a broncho. He's afraid  
Like every other thing,  
And trembles, morning, noon and night,  
Lest I should spring, and sting!

<sup>1</sup> From *The Congo and Other Poems* by Vachel Lindsay. Copyright, 1914, by the Macmillan Company.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### THE MOON'S THE NORTH WIND'S COOKY

*(What the Little Girl Said)*

The Moon's the North Wind's Cooky.  
He bites it, day by day,  
Until there's but a rim of scraps  
That crumble all away.

The South Wind is a baker,  
He kneads clouds in his den,  
And bakes a crisp new moon *that . . . greedy*  
*North . . . Wind . . . eats . . . again!*

### YET GENTLE WILL THE GRIFFIN BE

*(What Grandpa told the Children)*

The moon? It is a griffin's egg,  
Hatching to-morrow night.  
And how the little boys will watch  
With shouting and delight  
To see him break the shell and stretch  
And creep across the sky.  
The boys will laugh. The little girls,  
I fear, may hide and cry.  
Yet gentle will the griffin be,  
Most decorous and fat,  
And walk up to the milky way . . .  
And lap it like a cat.

*Vachel Lindsay*

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

### A HILLSIDE THAW

To think to know the country and not know  
The hillside on the day the sun lets go  
Ten million silver lizards out of snow.  
As often as I've seen it done before  
I can't pretend to tell the way it's done.  
It looks as if some magic of the sun  
Lifted the rug that bred them on the floor  
And the light breaking on them made them **run**.  
But if I thought to stop the wet stampede,  
And caught one silver lizard by the tail,  
And put my foot on one without avail,  
And threw myself wet-elbowed and wet-kneed  
In front of twenty others' wriggling speed,—  
In the confusion of them all aglitter  
And birds that joined in the excited fun  
By doubling and redoubling song and twitter,  
I have no doubt I'd end by holding none.

It takes the moon for this. The sun's a wizard  
By all I tell; but so's the moon a witch.  
From the high west she makes a gentle cast  
And suddenly without a jerk or twitch  
She has her spell on every single lizard.  
I fancied when I looked at eight o'clock  
The swarm still ran and scuttled just as fast.  
The moon was waiting for her chill effect.  
I looked at ten: the swarm was turned to rock  
In every life-like posture of the swarm,  
Transfixed on mountain slopes almost erect.  
Across each other and side by side they lay.  
The spell that so could hold them as they were



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Was wrought through trees without a breath of storm  
To make a leaf, if there had been one, stir.  
It was the moon's. She held them until day,  
One lizard at the end of every ray.  
The thought of my attempting such a stay!

*Robert Frost*

## APPARITIONS

### I

Such a starved bank of moss  
Till, that May-morn,  
Blue ran the flash across:  
Violets were born!

### II

Sky — what a scowl of cloud  
Till, near and far,  
Ray on ray split the shroud:  
Splendid, a star!

### III

World — how it walled about  
Life with disgrace  
Till God's own smile came out:  
That was thy face!

*Robert Browning*

## ISRAFEL

(And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who  
has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—*Koran*)

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell  
Whose heart-strings are a lute;  
None sing so wildly well

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

As the angel Israfel,  
And the giddy stars (so legends tell)  
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell  
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above  
In her highest noon,  
The enamoured moon  
Blushes with love,  
While, to listen, the red levin<sup>1</sup>  
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,  
Which were seven)  
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir  
And the other listening things)  
That Israfeli's fire  
Is owing to that lyre  
By which he sits and sings,  
The trembling living wire  
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,  
Where deep thoughts are a duty,  
Where Love's a grown-up God,  
Where the Houri glances are  
Imbued with all the beauty  
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,  
Israfeli, who despisest  
An unimpassioned song;  
To thee the laurels belong,  
Best bard, because the wisest:  
Merrily live, and long!

<sup>1</sup> *Levin*: a poetic word for lightning.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

The ecstacies above  
With thy burning measures suit:  
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,  
With the fervor of thy lute —  
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this  
Is a world of sweets and sour;  
Our flowers are merely — flowers,  
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss  
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell  
Where Israfel  
Hath dwelt, and he where I,  
He might not sing so wildly well  
A mortal melody,  
While a bolder note than this might swell  
From my lyre within the sky.

*Edgar Allan Poe*

## FANTASY

A bird ran up the onyx steps of night,  
Seeking the moon upon her silver throne;  
But stars confused him with their insolent light  
And left him in the friendless skies, alone.

He watched the winds, disheveled and awry,  
Hurling the clouds, like pillows from their beds;  
He saw the mountain-peaks that nudged the sky,  
Take off the wreaths of sunset from their heads.

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

He heard the storms, a troupe of headstrong boys,  
    (Locked up as punishment for howling tears)  
Beat on the ebony doors with such a noise,  
    That all the angels had to hold their ears.

Frightened, he left the halls of thundering sound  
    For a less dazzling height, a lowlier dream. . .  
And, perching on a watery bough, he found  
    The moon, her white laugh rippling from the stream.

*Louis Untermeyer*

### THREE PICTURES

#### WISTARIA BLOSSOMS

I see them on my trellises and walls  
And straightway dream of distant waterfalls;  
But when to distant waterfalls I roam  
I dream of my wistarias at home.

#### ALMOND BLOSSOMS

A rosy cloud of the dawn I see  
Entangled there in the almond tree!

#### A SNOWFALL ON PLUM TREES AFTER THEY HAD BLOOMED

It is, indeed, a pleasant thing to know  
Twice-flowering plum trees in my garden grow.

*Charles Dalmory*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THEOLOGY

The blade is sharp, the reaper stout,  
And every daisy dies.  
Their souls are fluttering about —  
We call them butterflies.

*Joyce Kilmer*

## APES AND IVORY

Apes and ivory, skulls and roses, in junks of old Hong-  
Kong,  
Gliding over a sea of dreams to a haunted shore of song,  
Masts of gold and sails of satin, shimmering out of the  
East,  
Oh, Love has little need of you now to make his heart a  
feast.

Or is it an elephant, white as milk and bearing a severed  
head  
That tatters his broad soft wrinkled flanks in tawdry  
patches of red,  
With a negro giant to walk beside and a temple dome  
above,  
Where ruby and emerald shatter the sun, — is it these that  
should please my love?

Or is it a palace of pomegranates, where ivory-limbed  
young slaves  
Lure a luxury out of the noon in the swooning fountain's  
waves;

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

Or couch like cats and sun themselves on the warm white  
marble brink?

Oh, Love has little to ask of these, this day in May, I  
think.

Is it Lebanon cedars or purple fruits of the honeyed  
southern air,

Spikenard, saffron, roses of Sharon, cinnamon, calamus,  
myrrh,

A bed of spices, a fountain of waters, or the wild white  
wings of a dove,

Now, when the winter is over and gone, is it these that  
should please my love?

The leaves outburst on the hazel-bough and the haw-  
thorn's heaped with flower,

And God has bidden the crisp clouds build my love a  
lordlier tower,

Taller than Lebanon, whiter than snow, in the fresh blue  
skies above;

And the wild rose wakes in the winding lanes of the  
radiant land I love.

*Apes and ivory, skulls and roses, in junks of old Hong-  
Kong,*

*Gliding over a sea of dreams to a haunted shore of song,  
Masts of gold and sails of satin, shimmering out of the  
East,*

*Oh, Love has little need of you now to make his heart  
a feast.*

*Alfred Noyes*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### CHIMES

Brief, on a flying night  
From the shaken tower,  
A flock of bells take flight,  
And go with the hour.

Like birds from the cote to the gales,  
Abrupt — O hark!  
A fleet of bells set sails,  
And go to the dark.

Sudden the cold airs swing,  
Alone, aloud,  
A verse of bells takes wing  
And flies with the cloud.

*Alice Meynell*

### A TREE AT DUSK

With secrets in their eyes the blue-winged Hours  
Rustle through the meadow  
Dropping shadow.

Yawning among red flowers,  
The Moon Child with her golden hoop  
And a pink star drifting after,  
Leans to me where I droop.

I hear her delicate, soft laughter,  
And through my hair her tiny fingers creep. . . .

I shall sleep.

*Winifred Welles*

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

### VARIATIONS ON AN OLD NURSERY RHYME

The King of China's daughter  
So beautiful to see  
With her face like yellow water, left  
Her nutmeg tree.

Her little rope for skipping  
She skipped and gave it me —  
Made of painted notes of singing-birds  
Among the fields of tea.

I skipped across the nutmeg grove, —  
I skipped across the sea;  
But neither sun nor moon, my dear,  
Has yet caught me.

*Edith Sitwell*

### WHIM

When trout swim down Great Ormond Street  
And sea-gulls cry above them lightly  
And hawthorns heave cold flagstones up  
To blossom whitely

Against old walls of houses there,  
Gustily shaking out in moonlight  
Their country sweetness on sweet air;  
And in the sunlight

By the green margin of that water  
Children dip white feet and shout,  
Casting nets in the braided water  
To catch the trout:



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Then I shall hold my breath and die,  
Swearing I never loved you; no,  
'You were not lovely!' I shall cry,  
'I never loved you so.'

*Conrad Aiken*

## BLOOM

When flowers thrust their head above the ground  
in showers pale as raindrops, and as round,  
who would suspect that such, before they're gone,  
could hold the sun?

So fine a pressure from above can bring  
so frail a thing to push its way aloft? —  
through clay, a woman might consider cloth  
for constant stitching?

Right straight down and right straight up again,  
through holes so close, no manly eye can see  
the bloom come out of needles — or can she  
be using rain?

And now that she still labours in the gloom,  
her room just lighted by the sun turned moon —  
need any man be told what flowers are,  
that hold a star?

*Alfred Kreymborg*

## CAPRICCIO

I shall have pearls blacker than caviar,  
Rubies such as a ripe pomegranate bleeds,  
Gold pale as honey dripping from a star,  
Brought me by slaves like snow and apple-seeds.

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

I shall have linen smooth as pigeons' throats,  
I shall have purple more than sunset-red,  
The velvet leap of leopards to my boats,  
The fragrance of the cedars to my bed.

I shall have music stronger than the wind  
And sweeter than a Chinese apricot.  
In gardens like translucent melon-rind  
I shall have dreams as sharp as bergamot.

Before my throning presence, emperors  
Will stand abashed as troubled children do.  
I shall not smile though every knee defers,  
But bid them go, bid them bring night, and you.

*Babette Deutsch*

## A PHANTASY OF HEAVEN

Perhaps he plays with cherubs now,  
Those little, golden boys of God,  
Bending, with them, some silver bough,  
The while a seraph, head a-nod,

Slumbers on guard; how they will run  
And shout, if he should wake too soon, —  
As fruit more golden than the sun  
And riper than the full-grown moon,

Conglobed in clusters, weighs them down,  
Like Atlas heaped with starry signs.  
And, if they're tripped, heel over crown,  
By hidden coils of mighty vines, —

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Perhaps the seraph, swift to pounce,  
Will hale them, vexed, to God — and He  
Will only laugh, remembering, once  
He was a boy in Galilee!

*Harry Kemp*

DICK SAID:  
(*Concerning Heaven*)

Well, Heaven's hard to understand —  
But it's a kind of great, big land  
All full of gold and glory;  
With rivers green and pink and red,  
And houses made of gingerbread  
Like in the fairy story.

The floors they use are made of clouds;  
And there are crowds and crowds and crowds  
Who sing and dance till seven.  
But then they must keep still because  
God and the Dream-Man and Santa Claus  
Sleep in the big House of Heaven.

God, He sleeps on the first two floors;  
And the Dream-Man sleeps above Him and snores,  
A tired-out story-teller;  
And Santa Claus, who hates the noise,  
He sleeps on the roof with all of his toys —  
And the angels live in the cellar.

Now, the angels never sleep a wink,  
They're much too busy to stop and think  
Or play on harps and guitars.  
They're always cleaning the sun at night,  
And all day long, to keep them bright,  
They polish the moon and the stars.

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

They clean the streets and they tidy the rooms,  
And they sweep out Heaven with a million brooms,  
And they hurry each other when they nod,  
And they work so fast that they almost fall —  
But God just sits and never works at all;  
And that's because He's God!

*Louis Untermeyer*

## SEA SHELL

Sea Shell, Sea Shell,  
Sing me a song, O please!  
A song of ships, and sailor men,  
And parrots, and tropical trees,  
Of islands lost in the Spanish Main  
Which no man ever may find again,  
Of fishes and corals under the waves,  
And sea-horses stabled in great green caves.  
Sea Shell, Sea Shell,  
Sing of the things you know so well.

*Amy Lowell*

## A COMPARISON

Apple blossoms look like snow,  
They're different, though.  
Snow falls softly, but it brings  
Noisy things:  
Sleighs and bells, forts and fights,  
Cosy nights.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

But apple blossoms when they go,  
White and slow,  
Quiet all the orchard space,  
Till the place  
Hushed with falling sweetness seems  
Filled with dreams.

*John Farrar*

## BALLADE OF BLUE CHINA

There's a joy without canker or cark,  
There's a pleasure eternally new,  
'Tis to gloat on the glaze and the mark  
Of china that's ancient and blue;  
Unchipp'd all the centuries through  
It has pass'd since the chime of it rang,  
And they fashion'd it, figure and hue,  
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

These dragons (their tails, you remark,  
Into bunches of gillyflowers grew), —  
When Noah came out of the ark,  
Did these lie in wait for his crew?  
They snorted, they snapp'd and they slew;  
They were mighty of fin and of fang,  
And their portraits Celestials drew  
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

Here's a pot with a cot in a park,  
In a park where the peach-blossoms blew,  
Where the lovers eloped in the dark,  
Lived, died, and were changed into two

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

Bright birds that eternally flew  
Through the boughs of the may, as they sang;  
'Tis a tale was undoubtedly true  
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

### ENVOY

Come, snarl at my ecstasies, do,  
Kind critic, your "tongue has a tang,"  
But — a sage never heeded a shrew  
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

*Andrew Lang*

### SOLITUDE

When you have tidied all the things for the night,  
And while your thoughts are fading to their sleep,  
You'll pause a moment in the late firelight,  
Too sorrowful to weep.

The large and gentle furniture has stood  
In sympathetic silence all the day  
With that old kindness of domestic wood;  
Nevertheless the haunted room will say:  
"Someone must be away."

The little dog rolls over half awake,  
Stretches his paws, yawns, looking up at you,  
Wags his tail very slightly for your sake,  
That you may feel he is unhappy too.

A distant engine whistles, or the floor  
Creaks, the wandering night-wind bangs a door.  
Silence is scattered like a broken glass.

The minutes prick their ears and run about,  
Then one by one subside again and pass  
Sedately in, monotonously out.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

You bend your head and wipe away a tear.  
Solitude walks one heavy step more near.

*Harold Monro*

### THE DINKEY-BIRD

In an ocean, 'way out yonder  
    (As all sapient people know),  
Is the land of Wonder-Wander,  
    Whither children love to go;  
It's their playing, romping, swinging,  
    That give great joy to me  
While the Dinkey-Bird goes singing  
    In the amfalula tree!

There the gum-drops grow like cherries  
    And taffy's thick as peas —  
Caramels you pick like berries  
    When, and where, and how you please;  
Big red sugar-plums are clinging  
    To the cliffs beside that sea  
Where the Dinkey-Bird is singing  
    In the amfalula tree.

So when children shout and scamper  
    And make merry all the day,  
When there's naught to put a damper  
    To the ardor of their play;  
When I hear their laughter ringing,  
    Then I'm sure as sure can be  
That the Dinkey-Bird is singing  
    In the amfalula tree.

## WHIMS AND FANTASIES

For the Dinkey-Bird's bravuras  
And staccatos are so sweet —  
His roulades, appoggiaturas,<sup>1</sup>  
And robustos so complete,  
That the youth of every nation —  
Be they near or far away —  
Have especial delectation  
In that gladsome roundelay.

Their eyes grow bright and brighter  
Their lungs begin to crow,  
Their hearts get light and lighter,  
And their cheeks are all aglow;  
For an echo cometh bringing  
The news to all and me,  
That the Dinkey-Bird is singing  
In the amfalula tree.

I'm sure you like to go there  
To see your feathered friend —  
And so many goodies grow there  
You would like to comprehend!  
*Speed, little dreams, your winging*  
*To that land across the sea*  
*Where the Dinkcy-Bird is singing*  
*In the amfalula tree!*

*Eugene Field*

<sup>1</sup> These are the little twists, runs and shades in singing.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

### I WONDER WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE DROWNED?

Look at my knees,  
That island rising from the steamy seas!  
The candle's a tall lightship; my two hands  
Are boats and barges anchored to the sands,  
With mighty cliffs all round;  
They're full of wine and riches from far lands. . . .  
I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?

I can make caves,  
By lifting up the island and huge waves  
And storms, and then with head and ears well under  
Blow bubbles with a monstrous roar like thunder,  
A bull-of-Bashan sound.  
The seas run high and the boats split asunder. . . .  
I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?

The thin soap slips  
And slithers like a shark under the ships.  
My toes are on the soap-dish — that's the effect  
Of my huge storms; an iron steamer's wrecked!  
The soap slides round and round;  
He's biting the old sailors, I expect. . . .  
I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?

*Robert Graves*

*TALES AND BALLADS*



## TALES AND BALLADS

### LITTLE BREECHES

I don't go much on religion,  
I never ain't had no show;  
But I've got a middlin' tight grip, sir  
On the handful o' things I know.  
I don't pan out on the prophets  
And free-will, and that sort of thing,—  
But I believe in God and the angels,  
Ever sence one night last spring.

I come into town with some turnips,  
And my little Gabe came along,—  
No four-year-old in the county  
Could beat him for pretty and strong,  
Peart and chipper and sassy,  
Always ready to swear and fight,—  
And I'd larnt him to chaw terbacker  
Just to keep his milk-teeth white.

The snow come down like a blanket  
And I passed by Taggart's store;  
I went in for a jug of molasses  
And left the team at the door.  
They scared at something and started,—  
I heard one little squall,  
And hell-to-split over the prairie  
Went team, Little Breeches and all.

Hell-to-split over the prairie,  
I was almost froze with skeer;  
But we roused up some torches,  
And sarched for 'em far and near.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

At last we struck hosses and wagon,  
Snowed under a soft white mound,  
Upsot, dead beat, — but of little Gabe  
No hide nor hair was found.

And here all hope soured on me,  
Of my fellow-critter's aid, —  
I jest flopped down on my marrow-bones,  
Crotch-deep in the snow, and prayed.

. . . . .  
By this, the torches was played out,  
And me and Isrul Parr  
Went off for some wood to a sheepfold  
That he said was somewhar thar.

We found it at last, and a little shed  
Where they shut up the lambs at night.  
We looked in and seen them huddled thar,  
So warm and sleepy and white;  
And thar sot Little Breeches and chirped,  
As peart as ever you see,  
“I want a chaw of terbacker,  
And that's what's the matter of me.”

How did he git thar? Angels.  
He could never have walked in that storm.  
They jest scooped down and toted him  
To whar it was safe and warm.  
And I think that saving a little child,  
And bringing him to his own,  
Is a derned sight better business  
Than loafing around The Throne.

*John Hay*

## TALES AND BALLADS

### DANNY DEEVER

"What are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade.

"To turn you out, to turn you out," the Color-Sergeant said.

"What makes you look so white, so white?" said Files-on-Parade.

"I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch," the Color-Sergeant said.

For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can 'ear the  
Dead March play,

The regiment's in 'ollow square — they're hangin' him  
to-day;

They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,  
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard!" said Files-on-Parade.

"It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold," the Color-Sergeant said.

"What makes that front-rank man fall down?" says  
Files-on-Parade.

"A touch of sun, a touch of sun," the Color-Sergeant said.  
They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are marchin' of  
'im round,

They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the  
ground;

An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneaking', shooting  
hound —

O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"'Is cot was right 'and cot to mine," said Files-on-Parade.

"E's sleepin' out an' far to-night," the Color-Sergeant said.

"I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times," said Files-on-Parade.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

"E's drinkin' bitter beer alone," the Color-Sergeant said.  
They are hangin' Danny Deeever, you must mark 'im to 'is  
place,  
For 'e shot a comrade sleepin' — you must look 'im in  
the face;  
Nine 'undred of 'is county an' the regiment's disgrace,  
While they're hangin' Danny Deeever in the mornin'.

"What's that so black agin' the sun?" said Files-on-Parade.  
"It's Danny fightin' 'ard for life," the Color-Sergeant said.  
"What's that that whimpers over'ead?" said Files-on-  
Parade.

"It's Danny's soul that's passin' now," the Color-Sergeant  
said.  
For they're done with Danny Deeever, you can 'ear the  
quick-step play,  
The regiments in column, an' they're marchin' us away;  
Ho! the young recruits are shakin', an' they'll want their  
beer to-day,  
After hangin' Danny Deeever in the mornin'.

*Rudyard Kipling*

## DRAKE'S DRUM

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,  
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)  
Slung between the round shot in Nombro Dios Bay,  
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.  
Yarnder lumes the island, yarnder lie the ships,  
Wi' sailor lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,  
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin'  
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

## TALES AND BALLADS

Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas,  
    (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),  
Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,  
    An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe,  
"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,  
    Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;  
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,  
    An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them  
    long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come,  
    (Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),  
Slung atween the round shot, listen' for the drum,  
    An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.  
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,  
    Call him when ye sail to meet the foe;  
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag's flyin',  
    They shall find him, ware an' wakin', as they found  
    him long ago.

*Henry Newbolt*

## THE HORSE THIEF

There he moved, cropping the grass at the purple canyon's  
    lip.

His mane was mixed with the moonlight that silvered  
    his snow-white side,  
For the moon sailed out of a cloud with the wake of a  
    spectral ship.

I crouched and I crawled on my belly, my lariat coil  
    looped wide.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Dimly and dark the mesas broke on the starry sky.

A pall covered every color of their gorgeous glory at noon.

I smelt the yucca and mesquite, and stifled my heart's quick cry,

And wormed and crawled on my belly to where he moved against the moon!

Some Moorish barb was that mustang's sire. His lines were beyond all wonder.

From the prick of his ears to the flow of his tail he ached in my throat and eyes.

Steel and velvet grace! As the prophet says, God had "clothed his neck with thunder."

Oh, marvelous with the drifting cloud he drifted across the skies!

And then I was near at hand — crouched, and balanced, and cast the coil;

And the moon was smothered in cloud, and the rope through my hands with a rip!

But somehow I gripped and clung, with the blood in my brain a-boil, —

With a turn round the rugged tree-stump there on the purple canyon's lip.

Right into the stars he reared aloft, his red eye rolling and raging.

He whirled and sunfished and lashed, and rocked the earth to thunder and flame.

He squealed like a regular devil horse. I was haggard and spent and aging —

Roped clean, but almost storming clear, his fury too fierce to tame.

## TALES AND BALLADS

And I cursed myself for a tenderfoot moon-dazzled to  
play the part,

But I was doubly desperate then, with the posse pulled  
out from town,

Or I'd never have tried it. I only knew I must get a  
mount and a start.

The filly had snapped her foreleg short. I had had to  
shoot her down.

So there he struggled and strangled, and I snubbed him  
around the tree.

Nearer, a little nearer — hoofs planted, and lolling  
tongue —

Till a sudden slack pitched me backward. He reared  
right on top of me.

Mother of God — that moment! He missed me . . .  
and up I swung.

Somehow, gone daft completely and clawing a bunch of  
his mane,

As he stumbled and tripped in the lariat, there I was  
— up and astride

And cursing for seven counties! And the mustang? *Just  
insane!*

Crack-bang! went the rope; we cannoned off the tree  
— then — gods, that ride!

A rocket — that's all, a rocket! I dug with my teeth and  
nails.

Why, we never hit even the high spots (though I hardly  
remember things),

But I heard a monstrous booming like a thunder of flapping  
sails

When he spread — well, *call* me a liar! — when he  
spread those wings, those wings!

## THIS SINGING WORLD

So white that my eyes were blinded, thick-feathered and  
wide unfurled,

They beat the air into billows. We sailed, and the  
earth was gone.

Canyon and desert and mesa withered below, with the  
world.

And then I knew that mustang; for I — was Bellerophon!

Yes, glad as the Greek, and mounted on a horse of the  
elder gods,

With never a magic bridle or a fountain-mirror nigh!  
*My chaps and spurs and holster must have looked it?*  
What's the odds?

I'd a leg over lightning and thunder, careering across  
the sky!

And forever streaming before me, fanning my forehead  
cool,

Flowed a mane of molten silver; and just before my  
thighs

(As I gripped his velvet-muscled ribs, while I cursed myself  
for a fool),

The steady pulse of those pinions — their wonderful fall  
and rise!

The bandanna I bought in Bowie blew loose and whipped  
from my neck.

My shirt was stuck to my shoulders and ribboning out  
behind.

The stars were dancing, wheeling and glancing, dipping  
with smirk and beck.

The clouds were flowing, dusking and glowing. We  
rode a roaring wind.

## TALES AND BALLADS

We soared through the silver starlight to knock at the  
planets' gates.

New shimmering constellations came whirling into our  
ken.

Red stars and green and golden swung out of the void  
that waits

For man's great last adventure; the Signs took shape  
— and then

I knew the lines of that Centaur the moment I saw him  
come!

The musical box of the heavens all round us rolled to  
a tune

That tinkled and chimed and trilled with silver sounds  
that struck you dumb,

As if some archangel were grinding out the music of  
the moon.

Melody-drunk on the Milky Way, as we swept and soared  
hilarious,

Full in our pathway, sudden he stood — the Centaur of  
the Stars,

Flashing from head and hoofs and breast! I knew him  
for Sagittarius.

He reared, and bent and drew his bow. He crouched  
as a boxer spars.

Flung back on his haunches, weird he loomed — then  
leapt — and the dim void lightened.

Old White Wings shied and swerved aside, and fled  
from the splendor-shod.

Through a flashing welter of worlds we charged. I knew  
why my horse was frightened.

He *had* two faces — a dog's and a man's — that Baby-  
lonian god!

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Also, he followed us real as fear. Ping! went an arrow  
past.

My broncho buck-jumped, humping high. We plunged  
. . . I guess that's all!

I lay on the purple canyon's lip, when I opened my eyes  
at last —

Stiff and sore and my head like a drum, but I broke no  
bones in the fall.

So you know — and now you may string me up. Such  
was the way you caught me.

Thank you for letting me tell it straight, though you  
never could greatly care.

For I took a horse that wasn't mine! . . . But there's one  
the heavens brought me,

And I'll hang right happy, because I know he is wait-  
ing for me up there.

From creamy muzzle to cannon-bone, by God, he's a  
peerless wonder!

He is steel and velvet and furnace-fire, and death's  
supremest prize,

And never again shall be roped on earth that neck that is  
"clothed with thunder. . . ."

String me up, Dave! Go dig my grave! I *rode him*  
*across the skies!*

*William Rose Benét*

## A LEGEND OF CHERRIES

Now St. Joseph's cottage stood  
Close beside a cherry wood;  
And when all the trees grew red  
With their dangling fruit, 'tis said,

## TALES AND BALLADS

Jesus, at His mother's gown,  
Begged to have the branches down.  
All in vain she made reply,  
"Mother cannot reach so high,"  
For He begged them none the less,  
In His perfect childishness.  
Joseph, in his workshop near,  
Heard the Babe, and would not hear —  
Heard the Blessed Virgin say,  
"Joseph, pull them down, I pray!"  
But he answered, with a frown,  
"*Let His Father pull them down!*"  
Then, to Joseph's wonderment,  
Every cherry branch was bent;  
And Our Lady sweetly smiled,  
Picking cherries for her Child.

*Charles Dalmon*

### FROM THE DAY-BOOK OF A FORGOTTEN PRINCE

My father is happy or we should be poor,  
His gateway is wide and the folk of the moor  
Come singing so gaily right up to the door.

We live in a castle that's dingy and old;  
The casements are broken, the corridors cold;  
The larder is empty, the cook is a scold.

But father can dance and his singing is loud.  
From meadow and highway there's always a crowd  
That gathers to hear him, and this makes him proud.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

He roars out a song in a voice that is sweet,  
Of grandeur that's gone, rare viands to eat,  
And treasure that used to be laid at his feet.

He picks up his robe, faded, wrinkled and torn,  
Though banded in ermine, moth-eaten and worn,  
And held at the throat by a twisted old thorn.

He leaps in the air with a rickety grace  
And a kingly old smile illumines his face,  
While he fondles his beard and stares off into space.

The villagers laugh, then look quickly away,  
And some of them kneel in the orchard to pray.  
I often hear whispers: "The old king is fey!"

But after they're gone we shall find, if you please,  
White loaves and a pigeon and honey and cheese,  
And wine that we drink while I sit on his knees.

And then, while he sups, he will feed me and tell  
Of Mother, whom men used to call "The Gazelle,"  
And of glorious times before the curse fell.

At last he will sink, half-asleep, to the floor;  
The rafters will echo his quivering snore. . . .  
I go to find cook through the slack, oaken door.

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*My father is happy or we should be poor;  
His gateway is wide and the folk at the moor  
Come singing so gaily right up to the door.*

*Jean Starr Untermeyer*

## TALES AND BALLADS

### THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain  
shall meet,  
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;  
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed,  
nor Birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come  
from the ends of the earth!

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the Border side,  
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's  
pride:

He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn  
and the day,  
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her  
far away.

Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of  
the Guides:

"Is there never a man of all my men can say where  
Kamal hides?"

Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of the  
Ressalder,

"If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know  
where his pickets are.

"At dusk he harries the Abazai — at dawn he is into  
Bonair,

"But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,

"So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,

"By the favor of God ye may cut him off ere he win to  
the Tongue of Jagai,



## THIS SINGING WORLD

"But if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly  
turn ye then,  
"For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is  
sown with Kamal's men.  
"There is rock to the left, and rock to the right, and  
low lean thorn between,  
"And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a  
man is seen."

The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough  
dun was he,  
With the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell, and the  
head of the gallows-tree.  
The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay  
to eat —  
Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long  
at his meat.  
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can fly,  
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the  
Tongue of Jagai,  
Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon  
her back,  
And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made  
the pistol crack.  
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling  
ball went wide.  
"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said. "Show now if ye  
can ride."  
It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown dust-  
devils go,  
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare like a  
barren doe.

## TALES AND BALLADS

The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his head  
above,  
But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars, as a maiden  
plays with a glove.  
There was rock to the left and rock to the right, and low  
lean thorn between,  
And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho' never a  
man was seen.

They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their  
hoofs drum up the dawn,  
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like  
a new-roused fawn.  
The dun he fell at a water-course — in a woful heap fell he,  
And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and pulled  
the rider free.  
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand — small room  
was there to strive,  
“ ’Twas only by favor of mine,” quoth he, “ ye rode so  
long alive:  
“ There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was not  
a clump of tree,  
“ But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked  
on his knee.  
“ If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held it low,  
“ The little jackals that flee so fast, were feasting all in  
a row:  
“ If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held  
it high,  
“ The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till  
she could not fly.”  
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: “ Do good to bird  
and beast,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

" But count who come for the broken meats before thou  
makest a feast.

" If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my  
bones away,

" Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more than a  
thief could pay.

" They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their  
men on the garnered grain,

" The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when all  
the cattle are slain.

" But if thou thinkest the price be fair, — thy brethren  
wait to sup,

" The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn, — howl, dog, and  
call them up!

" And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer and  
gear and stack,

" Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight my own  
way back! "

Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set him upon  
his feet.

" No talk shall be of dogs," said he, " when wolf and grey  
wolf meet.

" May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed or breath;

" What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at the  
dawn with Death? "

Lightly answered the Colonel's son: " I hold by the blood  
of my clan:

" Take up the mare for my father's gift — by God, she  
has carried a man! "

The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and nuzzled against  
his breast,

" We be two strong men," said Kamal then, " but she  
loveth the younger best.

## TALES AND BALLADS

"So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise-studded rein,

"My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups twain."

The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it muzzle-end,  
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he; "will ye take the mate from a friend?"

"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight, "a limb for the risk of a limb.

"Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to him!"

With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a mountain-crest —

He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a lance in rest.

"Now here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a troop of the Guides,

"And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder rides.

"Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and bed,

"Thy life is his — thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.

"So thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes are thine,

"And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the Borderline,

"And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way to power —

"Belike they will raise thee to Ressalder when I am hanged in Peshawur."

## THIS SINGING WORLD

They have looked each other between the eyes, and there  
they found no fault,

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on  
leavened bread and salt:

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on fire  
and fresh-cut sod,

On the hilt and the halt of the Khyber knife, and the  
Wondrous Names of God.

The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's boy  
the dun,

And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where there  
went forth but one.

And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full twenty  
swords flew clear —

There was not a man but carried his feud with the blood  
of the mountaineer.

"Ha' done! ha' done!" said the Colonel's son. "Put up  
the steel at your sides!

"Last night ye had struck at a Border thief — to-night  
'tis a man of the Guides!"

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the two  
shall meet,*

*Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judg-  
ment Seat;*

*But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed,  
nor Birth,*

*When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come  
from the ends of the earth.*

*Rudyard Kipling*

## TALES AND BALLADS

### A BALLAD OF JOHN SILVER

We were schooner-rigged and rakish, with a long and lis-  
some hull,  
And we flew the pretty colours of the cross-bones and the  
skull;  
We'd a big black Jolly Roger flapping grimly at the fore,  
And we sailed the Spanish Water in the happy days of  
yore.

We'd a long brass gun amidships, like a well-conducted  
ship,  
We had each a brace of pistols and a cutlass at the hip;  
It's a point which tells against us, and a fact to be de-  
plored,  
But we chased the goodly merchant-men and laid their  
ships aboard.

Then the dead men fouled the scuppers and the wounded  
filled the chains,  
And the paint-work all was spatter-dashed with other  
people's brains,  
She was boarded, she was looted, she was scuttled till she  
sank,  
And the pale survivors left us by the medium of the plank.

O! then it was (while standing by the taffrail on the poop)  
We could hear the drowning folk lament the absent  
chicken-coop;  
Then, having washed the blood away, we'd little else to do  
Than to dance a quiet hornpipe as the old salts taught  
us to.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

O! the fiddle on the fo'c's'le, and the slapping naked soles,  
And the genial 'Down the middle, Jake, and curtsey when  
she rolls!'

With the silver seas around us and the pale moon over-  
head,  
And the look-out not a-looking and his pipe-bowl glowing  
red.

Ah! the pig-tailed, quidding pirates and the pretty pranks  
we played,

All have since been put a stop-to by the naughty Board  
of Trade;

The schooners and the merry crews are laid away to rest,  
A little south the sunset in the Islands of the Blest.

*John Masefield*

## THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

The blessèd damozel leaned out  
From the gold bar of Heaven;  
Her eyes were deeper than the depth  
Of waters stilled at even;  
She had three lilies in her hand,  
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,  
No wrought flowers did adorn,  
But a white rose of Mary's gift,  
For service meetly worn;  
Her hair that lay along her back  
Was yellow like ripe corn.

## TALES AND BALLADS

Herseemed<sup>1</sup> she scarce had been a day  
One of God's choristers;  
The wonder was not yet quite gone  
From that still look of hers;  
Albeit, to them she left, her day  
Had counted as ten years.

It was the rampart of God's house  
That she was standing on;  
By God built over the sheer depth  
The which is Space begun;  
So high, that looking downward thence  
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood  
Of ether, as a bridge,  
Beneath, the tides of day and night  
With flame and darkness ridge  
The void, as low as where this earth  
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met  
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,  
Spoke evermore among themselves  
Their heart-remembered names;  
And the souls mounting up to God  
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped  
Out of the circling charm;  
Until her bosom must have made  
The bar she leaned on warm,  
And the lilies lay as if asleep  
Along her bended arm.

<sup>1</sup> *Herseemed*: It seemed to her.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw  
Time, like a pulse, shake fierce  
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove  
Within the gulf to pierce  
Its path; and now she spoke as when  
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon  
Was like a little feather  
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now  
She spoke through the still weather.  
Her voice was like the voice the stars  
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,  
Strove not her accents there,  
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells  
Possessed the mid-day air,  
Strove not her steps to reach my side  
Down all the echoing stair?)

'I wish that he were come to me,  
For he will come,' she said.  
'Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on earth,  
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?  
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?  
And shall I feel afraid?

'When round his head the aureole clings,  
And he is clothed in white,  
I'll take his hand and go with him  
To the deep wells of light;  
As unto a stream we will step down,  
And bathe there in God's sight.

## TALES AND BALLADS

‘We two will stand beside that shrine,  
Occult, withheld, untrod,  
Whose lamps are stirred continually  
With prayer sent up to God;  
And see our prayers, granted, melt  
Each like a little cloud.

‘We two will lie i’ the shadow of  
That living mystic tree  
Within whose secret growth the Dove  
Is sometimes felt to be,  
While every leaf that His plumes touch  
Saith His Name audibly.

‘And I myself will teach to him,  
I myself, lying so,  
The songs I sing here; which his voice  
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,  
And find some knowledge at each pause,  
Or some new thing to know.’

‘We two,’ she said, ‘will seek the groves  
Where the lady Mary is,  
With her five handmaidens, whose names  
Are five sweet symphonies,  
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,  
Margaret and Rosalys.

‘He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:  
Then will I lay my cheek  
To his, and tell about our love,  
Not once abashed or weak:  
And the dear Mother will approve  
My pride, and let me speak.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

'Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,  
To Him round whom all souls  
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads  
Bowed with their aureoles;  
And angels meeting us shall sing  
To their citherns and citoles.<sup>1</sup>

'There will I ask of Christ the Lord  
Thus much for him and me: —  
Only to live as once on earth  
With Love, only to be,  
As then awhile, for ever now  
Together, I and he.'

She gazed and listened and then said,  
Less sad of speech than mild, —  
'All this is when he comes.' She ceased.  
The light thrilled towards her, filled  
With angels in strong level flight.  
Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path  
Was vague in distant spheres:  
And then she cast her arms along  
The golden barriers,  
And laid her face between her hands,  
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

*Dante Gabriel Rossetti*

<sup>1</sup> *Citherns and citoles*: stringed instruments like the zither and guitar.

## TALES AND BALLADS

### THE SLAVE'S DREAM

Beside the ungathered rice he lay  
His sickle in his hand;  
His breast was bare, his matted hair  
Was buried in the sand.  
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,  
He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams  
The lordly Niger flowed;  
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain  
Once more a king he strode;  
And heard the tinkling caravans  
Descend the mountain-road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen  
Among her children stand;  
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,  
They held him by the hand! —  
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids  
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode  
Along the Niger's bank;  
His bridle-reins were golden chains,  
And, with a martial clank,  
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel  
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,  
The bright flamingoes flew;  
From morn till night he followed their flight,  
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,  
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,  
And the hyæna scream,  
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds  
Beside some hidden stream;  
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,  
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,  
Shouted of liberty;  
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,  
With a voice so wild and free,  
That he started in his sleep and smiled  
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,  
Nor the burning heat of the day;  
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,  
And his lifeless body lay  
A worn-out fether, that the soul  
Had broken and thrown away!

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

## WILLY WINKIE

*Wee Willy Winkie,  
Runs through the town,  
Upstairs and downstairs  
In his night-gown,  
Tapping at the window,  
Peeping at the lock: —  
"Are all the babies gone to bed?  
It's now ten o'clock!"*

## TALES AND BALLADS

Then when noises all are still,  
Lamps all burn low,  
Bolted doors and windows creak,  
Open — and tiptoe,  
With his lanthorn and his staff,  
Grimly night-gowned,  
Like a watchman of the Night  
Winkie goes his round.

For of all the Angel guard,  
Time out of mind,  
He it is hath had in charge  
All Baby-kind,  
From the mud-lark, fast asleep  
On bare curbstone,  
To the puppet, plump and pink,  
Heir to the throne.

So when steeple clocks have tolled  
Sleep-time at hand,  
When mammas and nurses rub  
Eyes full of sand:  
Silver rattles all are hushed,  
Pink lids all furled,  
Winkie comes to oversee  
His little world.

Ay! but there is much to do  
For boys and girls:  
Wee bald heads to trim with floss,  
Empty mouths with pearls,  
Little pudding legs to mould  
Into human shapes;  
General repairs besides:  
Scratches and scrapes.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

There is much to teach likewise  
To girls and boys,  
How to caterwaul for pins,  
And crow for toys,  
How to clutch at pleasant beards  
Coming too close,  
How to neatly cram the mouth  
With fists and toes.

Then reports to be received  
From baby friends,  
Litter'd all about the place  
In odds and ends,  
Rattles, rings and rag-dolls  
Cast on the shelves,  
Shoes and socks, that sulk because  
Left to themselves.

Then if he make up his mind  
From what they tell,  
Baby, where its lines have fall'n,  
Isn't faring well.

Presto! Wee wee Winkie  
Bends o'er the bed,  
Picks up Baby, and away! . . .  
Some think it dead:

But the sly old watchman  
Winkie knows best,  
He has made for some bleak home  
With no baby bless'd,  
There he lays his charge to sleep,  
And with the morn,  
There is much to-do about  
Baby, New-born.

## TALES AND BALLADS

Upstairs and down, he goes  
In his night-gown,  
Till the Day comes peeping  
Into the town;  
Then he throws all shutters wide,  
Lets down the bars. . . .  
Goodnight, Watchman! Off he flies  
To blow out the stars.

*Daniel Henry Holmes*

### THE SANDS OF DEE

‘O Mary, go and call the cattle home,  
And call the cattle home,  
And call the cattle home  
Across the sands of Dee;’  
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,  
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,  
And o’er and o’er the sand,  
And round and round the sand,  
As far as eye could see.  
The rolling mist came down and hid the land:  
And never home came she.

‘Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair —  
A tress of golden hair,  
A drowned maiden’s hair  
Above the nets at sea?  
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair  
Among the stakes on Dee.’



## THIS SINGING WORLD

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,  
The cruel crawling foam,  
The cruel hungry foam,  
To her grave beside the sea:  
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home  
Across the sands of Dee.

*Charles Kingsley*

## THE PURITAN'S BALLAD

My love came up from Barnegat,  
The sea was in his eyes;  
He trod as softly as a cat  
And told me terrible lies.

His hair was yellow as new-cut pine  
In shavings curled and feathered;  
I thought how silver it would shine  
By cruel winters weathered.

But he was in his twentieth year,  
This time I'm speaking of;  
We were head over heels in love with fear  
And half a-feared of love.

My hair was piled in a copper crown —  
A devilish living thing,  
And the tortoise-shell pins fell down, fell down,  
When that snake uncoiled to spring.

His feet were used to treading a gale  
And balancing thereon;  
His face was brown as a foreign sail  
Threadbare against the sun.

## TALES AND BALLADS

His arms were thick as hickory logs  
Whittled to little wrists;  
Strong as the teeth of terrier dogs  
Were the fingers of his fists.

Within his arms I feared to sink  
Where lions shook their manes,  
And dragons drawn in azure ink  
Leapt quickened by his veins.

Dreadful his strength and length of limb  
As the sea to foundering ships;  
I dipped my hands in love for him  
No deeper than their tips.

But our palms were welded by a flame  
The moment we came to part,  
And on his knuckles I read my name  
Enscrolled within a heart.

And something made our wills to bend  
As wild as trees blown over;  
We were no longer friend and friend,  
But only lover and lover.

“In seven weeks or seventy years —  
God grant it may be sooner! —  
I'll make a handkerchief for your tears  
From the sails of my captain's schooner.

We'll wear our loves like wedding rings  
Long polished to our touch;  
We shall be busy with other things  
And they cannot bother us much.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

When you are skimming the wrinkled cream  
And your ring clinks on the pan,  
You'll say to yourself in a pensive dream,  
'How wonderful a man!'

When I am slitting a fish's head  
And my ring clanks on the knife,  
I'll say with thanks, as a prayer is said,  
'How beautiful a wife!'

And I shall fold my decorous paws  
In velvet smooth and deep,  
Like a kitten that covers up its claws  
To sleep and sleep and sleep.

Like a little blue pigeon you shall bow  
Your bright alarming crest;  
In the crook of my arm you'll lay your brow  
To rest and rest and rest."

*Will he never come back from Barnegat  
With thunder in his eyes,  
Treading as soft as a tiger cat,  
To tell me terrible lies?*

*Elinor Wylie*

## WHOOPEE TI YI YO

As I was a-walking one morning for pleasure,  
I spied a cow-puncher all riding along;  
His hat was throwed back and his spurs was a-jingling,  
And he approached me, a-singing this song:

## TALES AND BALLADS

*Whoopie ti yi yo, git along, little dogies,<sup>1</sup>  
It's your misfortune, and none of my own.  
Whoopie ti yi yo, git along, little dogies,  
For you know Wyoming will be your new home.*

Early in spring we round up the dogies,  
Mark 'em and brand 'em and bob off their tails;  
Round up the horses, load up the chuck-wagon,  
Then throw the dogies upon the old trail.

It's whooping and yelling and driving the dogies;  
Oh, how I wish you would all go on!  
It's whooping and punching and "Go on, little dogies,  
For you know Wyoming will be your new home."

Oh, you'll be soup for Uncle Sam's Injuns, —  
It's "beef, heap beef," I hear them cry.  
Git along, git along, git along, little dogies,  
You're going to be beef steers by and by.

*Whoopie ti yi yo, git along, little dogies,  
It's your misfortune, and none of my own.  
Whoopie ti yi yo, git along, little dogies,  
For you know Wyoming will be your new home.  
American Cowboy Ballad*

### FATHER GILLIGAN

The old priest Peter Gilligan  
Was weary night and day,  
For half his flock were in their beds,  
Or under green sod lay.

<sup>1</sup> *dogies*: young cattle.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Once while he nodded on a chair,  
At the moth-hour of eve,  
Another poor man sent for him,  
And he began to grieve.

“ I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,  
For people die and die ”;  
And after cried he, “ God forgive!  
My body spake, not I ! ”

And then, half-lying on the chair,  
He knelt, prayed, fell asleep;  
And the moth-hour went from the fields,  
And stars began to peep.

They slowly into millions grew,  
And leaves shook in the wind;  
And God covered the world with shade,  
And whispered to mankind.

Upon the time of sparrow-chirp  
When the moths came once more,  
The old priest Peter Gilligan  
Stood upright on the floor.

“ *Mavrone, mavrone!* the man has died,  
While I slept on the chair ”;  
He roused his horse out of its sleep,  
And rode with little care.

He rode now as he never rode,  
By rocky lane and fen;  
The sick man's wife opened the door:  
“ Father! you come again! ”

## TALES AND BALLADS

“And is the poor man dead?” he cried.

“He died an hour ago.”

The old priest Peter Gilligan

In grief swayed to and fro.

“When you were gone he turned and died,

As merry as a bird.”

The old priest Peter Gilligan

He knelt him at that word.

“He who hath made the night of stars

For souls who tire and bleed,

Sent one of His great angels down

To help me in my need.

“He who is wrapped in purple robes,

With planets in his care,

Had pity on the least of things

Asleep upon a chair.”

*William Butler Yeats*

## THE HIGHWAYMAN <sup>1</sup>

### PART ONE

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,  
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,  
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,  
And the highwayman came riding —

Riding — riding —

The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted by permission from *Collected Poems, Vol. I*, by Alfred Noyes. Copyright, 1913, by Frederick A. Stokes Company.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace  
at his chin,

A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;  
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to  
the thigh!

And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,

His pistol butts a-twinkle,  
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark  
inn-yard,

And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was  
locked and barred;

He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be  
waiting there

But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,

Bess, the landlord's daughter,  
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked  
Where Tim the ostler<sup>1</sup> listened; his face was white and  
peaked;

His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,  
But he loved the landlord's daughter,

The landlord's red-lipped daughter,  
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say —

“One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize to-  
night,

But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morn-  
ing light;

Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the  
day,

<sup>1</sup> *Ostler*: one who takes care of the horses, a groom.

## TALES AND BALLADS

Then look for me by moonlight,  
    Watch for me by moonlight,  
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar  
    the way."

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her  
    hand,  
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt  
    like a brand  
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his  
    breast;  
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,  
    (Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight!)  
Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped  
    away to the West.

### PART TWO

He did not come in the dawning; he did not come at noon;  
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon,  
When the road was a gipsy's ribbon, looping the purple  
    moor,  
A red-coat troop came marching —  
    Marching — marching —  
King George's men came marching, up to the old inn-door.  
They said no word to the landlord, they drank his ale  
    instead,  
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot  
    of her narrow bed;  
Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their  
    side!  
There was death at every window;  
    And hell at one dark window;



## THIS SINGING WORLD

For Bess could see, through her casement, the road that  
*he* would ride.

They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering  
jest;

They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel  
beneath her breast!

"Now keep good watch!" and they kissed her. She  
heard the dead man say —

*Look for me by moonlight;*

*Watch for me by moonlight;*

*I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar  
the way!*

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held  
good!

She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat  
or blood!

They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours  
crawled by like years,

Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,

Cold, on the stroke of midnight,

The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least  
was hers!

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for  
the rest!

Up, she stood up to attention, with the barrel beneath her  
breast,

She would not risk their hearing; she would not strive  
again;

For the road lay bare in the moonlight;

Blank and bare in the moonlight;

## TALES AND BALLADS

And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed to  
her love's refrain.

*Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot!* Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs  
ringing clear;

*Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot,* in the distance? Were they deaf that  
they did not hear?

Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,  
The highwayman came riding,

Riding, riding!

The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up  
straight and still!

*Tlot-tlot,* in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot,* in the echoing  
night!

Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!  
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep  
breath,

Then her finger moved in the moonlight,

Her musket shattered the moonlight,

Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him —  
with her death.

He turned; he spurred to the West; he did not know who  
stood

Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her  
own red blood!

Not till the dawn he heard it, his face grew grey to hear  
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,

The landlord's black-eyed daughter,

Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in  
the darkness there.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the  
sky,  
With the white road smoking behind him and rapier brandished high!  
Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden noon; wine-red was  
his velvet coat,  
When they shot him down on the highway,  
Down like a dog on the highway,  
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch  
of lace at his throat.

\* \* \* \* \*

*And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is  
in the trees,  
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy  
seas,  
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple  
moor,  
A highwayman comes riding —  
Riding — riding —  
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.*

*Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-  
yard;  
He taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked  
and barred;  
He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be  
waiting there  
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,  
Bess, the landlord's daughter,  
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.*

*Alfred Noyes*

*LAUGHING LEGENDS*



# LAUGHING LEGENDS

## THE LOST SHOE

Poor little Lucy  
By some mischance,  
Lost her shoe  
As she did dance:  
'Twas not on the stairs,  
Not in the hall;  
Not where they sat  
At supper at all.  
She looked in the garden,  
But there it was not;  
Henhouse, or kennel,  
Or high dovecote.  
Dairy and meadow,  
And wild woods through  
Showed not a trace  
Of Lucy's shoe.  
Bird nor bunny  
Nor glimmering moon  
Breathed a whisper  
Of where 'twas gone.  
It was cried and cried,  
Oyez and Oyez!  
In French, Dutch, Latin,  
And Portuguese.  
Ships the dark seas  
Went plunging through,  
But none brought news  
Of Lucy's shoe;  
And still she patters  
In silk and leather,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

O'er snow, sand, shingle,  
In every weather;  
Spain, and Africa,  
Hindustan,  
Java, China,  
And lamped Japan;  
Plain and desert,  
She hops — hops through,  
Pernambuco  
To gold Peru;  
Mountain and forest,  
And river too,  
All the world over  
For her lost shoe.

*Walter De la Mare*

## THE OLD NURSE'S SONG

Ptolemy, poor Ptolemy,  
In a dusty room doth lie —  
Beggars for his bedfellows,  
Pence upon his eye.  
The old men spend his money,  
The nursemaids eat his honey —  
But no one knows at all, my dear,  
Where Ptolemy doth lie.  
The moon, a milk-white unicorn,  
She chased me round the town:  
She chased me up — and chased me down —  
She whistled through her horn:  
“Go and listen at the keyhole

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

When the cold wind blows —  
It's Ptolemy, poor Ptolemy,  
A-snoring through his nose."

*Edith Sitwell*

### THE TWINS

In form and feature, face and limb,  
I grew so like my brother,  
That folks got taking me for him,  
And each for one another.  
It puzzled all our kith and kin,  
It reached an awful pitch;  
For one of us was born a twin,  
Yet not a soul knew which.

One day (to make the matter worse),  
Before our names were fixed,  
As we were being washed by nurse  
We got completely mixed;  
And thus, you see, by Fate's decree,  
(Or rather nurse's whim),  
My brother John got christened *me*,  
And I got christened *him*.

This fatal likeness even dogg'd  
My footsteps when at school,  
And I was always getting flogg'd,  
For John turned out a fool.  
I put this question hopelessly  
To every one I knew —  
What *would* you do, if you were me,  
To prove that you were *you*?



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Our close resemblance turned the tide  
Of my domestic life;  
For somehow my intended bride  
Became my brother's wife.  
In short, year after year the same  
Absurd mistake went on;  
And when I died — the neighbors came  
And buried brother John!

*Henry S. Leigh*

## THE LITTLE PEACH

A little peach in the orchard grew —  
A little peach of emerald hue;  
Warmed by the sun and wet by the dew,  
It grew.

One day, passing the orchard through,  
That little peach dawned on the view  
Of Johnnie Jones and his sister Sue —  
Those two.

Up at the peach a club he threw —  
Down from the tree on which it grew  
Fell the little peach of emerald hue —  
Mon dieu!

She took a bite and he a chew,  
And then the trouble began to brew —  
Trouble the doctor couldn't subdue —  
Too true!

Under the turf where the daisies grew  
They planted John and his sister Sue,  
And their little souls to the angels flew —  
Boo-hoo!

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

But what of the peach of emerald hue,  
Warmed by the sun and wet by the dew?  
Ah, well, its mission on earth was through —  
Adieu!

*Eugene Field*

### ROBINSON CRUSOE'S STORY

The night was thick and hazy  
When the "Piccadilly Daisy"  
Carried down the crew and captain in the sea;  
And I think the water drowned 'em;  
For they never, never found 'em,  
And I know they didn't come ashore with me.

Oh! 'twas very sad and lonely  
When I found myself the only  
Population on this cultivated shore;  
But I've made a little tavern  
In a rocky little cavern,  
And I sit and watch for people at the door.

I spent no time in looking  
For a girl to do my cooking,  
As I'm quite a clever hand at making stews;  
But I had that fellow Friday,  
Just to keep the tavern tidy,  
And to put a Sunday polish on my shoes.

I have a little garden  
That I'm cultivating lard in,  
As the things I eat are rather tough and dry;  
For I live on toasted lizards,  
Prickly pears, and parrot gizzards,  
And I'm really very fond of beetle-pie.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

The clothes I had were furry,  
And it made me fret and worry  
When I found the moths were eating off the hair;  
And I had to scrape and sand 'em,  
And I boiled 'em and I tanned 'em,  
Till I got the fine morocco suit I wear.

I sometimes seek diversion  
In a family excursion  
With the few domestic animals you see;  
And we take along a carrot  
As refreshment for the parrot,  
And a little can of jungleberry tea.

Then we gather as we travel,  
Bits of moss and dirty gravel,  
And we chip off little specimens of stone;  
And we carry home as prizes  
Funny bugs, of handy sizes,  
Just to give the day a scientific tone.

If the roads are wet and muddy  
We remain at home and study, —  
For the Goat is very clever at a sum, —  
And the Dog, instead of fighting,  
Studies ornamental writing,  
While the Cat is taking lessons on the drum.

We retire at eleven,  
And we rise again at seven;  
And I wish to call attention, as I close,  
To the fact that all the scholars  
Are correct about their collars,  
And particular in turning out their toes.

*Charles E. Carryl*

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

### THE BALLAD OF THE BILLYCOCK

It was the good ship *Billycock*, with thirteen men aboard,  
Athirst to grapple with their country's foes, —  
A crew, 'twill be admitted, not numerically fitted  
To navigate a battleship in prose.

It was the good ship *Billycock* put out from Plymouth  
Sound,  
While lustily the gallant heroes cheered,  
And all the air was ringing with the merry bo'sun's sing-  
ing,  
Till in the gloom of night she disappeared.

But when the morning broke on her, behold, a dozen ships,  
A dozen ships of France around her lay,  
(Or, if that isn't plenty, I will gladly make it twenty),  
And hemmed her close in Salamander Bay.

Then to the Lord High Admiral there spake a cabin-boy:  
"Methinks," he said, "the odds are somewhat great,  
And, in the present crisis, a cabin-boy's advice is  
That you and France had better arbitrate!"

"Pooh!" said the Lord High Admiral, and slapped his  
manly chest,  
"Pooh! That would be both cowardly and wrong;  
Shall I, a gallant fighter, give the needy ballad-writer  
No suitable material for song?"

"Nay — is the shorthand-writer here? — I tell you, one  
and all,  
I mean to do my duty, as I ought;  
With eager satisfaction let us clear the decks for action  
And fight the craven Frenchmen!" So they fought.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

And (after several stanzas which as yet are incomplete,  
Describing all the fight in epic style)  
When the *Billycock* was going, she'd a dozen prizes tow-  
ing,  
(Or twenty, as above) in single file!

Ah, long in glowing English hearts the story will remain,  
The memory of that historic day,  
And, while we rule the ocean, we will picture with emotion  
The *Billycock* in Salamander Bay!

P.S. — I've lately noticed that the critics — who, I think,  
In praising *my* productions are remiss —  
Quite easily are captured, and profess themselves enrapt-  
tured,  
By patriotic ditties such as *this*,

For making which you merely take some dauntless Eng-  
lishmen,

Guns, heroism, slaughter, and a fleet —  
Ingredients you mingle in a metre with a jingle,  
And there you have your masterpiece complete!

Why, then, with labour infinite, produce a book of verse  
To languish on the "All for Twopence" shelf?  
The ballad bold and breezy comes particularly easy —  
I mean to take to writing it myself!

*Anthony C. Deane*

## THE HERO COCKROACH

*(In the manner of the earlier Kipling)*

The Cockroach stood by the mickle wood in the flush of  
the astral dawn,

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

And he sniffed the air from the hidden lair where the  
Khyber swordfish spawn;  
The bilge and belch of the glutton Welsh as they smelted  
their warlock cheese  
Surged to and fro where the grinding floe wrenched at the  
Headland's knees.

*Half seas over! Under — up again!  
And the barnacles white in the moon!  
The pole star's chasing its tail like a pup again,  
And the dish runs away with the spoon!*

The waterspout came bellowing out of the red horizon's  
rim,  
And the gray Typhoon and the black Monsoon surged  
forth to the fight with him,  
With threefold might they surged to the fight for they  
hated the great bull Roach; —  
And they cried, "Begod!" as they lashed the sod, "And  
here is an Egg to Poach!

"We will bash his mug with his own raw lug new-stripped  
from off his dome,  
For there is no law but tooth and claw to the nor' nor' east  
of Nome!  
The Punjaub Gull shall have his skull ere he goes to the  
burning ghaut,  
For we have no time for aught but crime where the jungle  
lore is taught!  
Across the dark the Afghan Shark is whinnying for his  
head —  
There shall be no rule but death and drool till the deep  
red maws are fed!"

## THIS SINGING WORLD

*Half seas under! Up! and down again!  
And her keel was blown off in a squall!  
Girls, we misdoubt that we'll ever see town again —  
Haul, boys! Haul boys! Haul!*

The Cockroach spat — and he tilted his hat and he grinned  
through the lowering murk,  
The Cockroach felt in his rangoon belt for his good Ben-  
gali dirk,  
He reefed his mast against the blast and he bent his  
mizzen free  
And he flung the cleats of his binnacle sheets in the teeth  
of the yeasty sea!

He opened his mouth and he sluiced his drouth with his  
last good can of swipes —  
“ Begod! ” he cried, “ they come in pride, but they shall  
go home with the gripes! ”  
“ Begod,” he said, “ if they want my head it is here on  
top of my chine —  
It shall never be said that I doffed my head for the boast  
of a heathen line! ”  
And he scorned to wait but he dared his fate and loosed  
his bridle rein  
And leapt to close with his red-fanged foes in the trough of  
the howling main!

*Half seas over! Down again and up!  
And the cobra is wild with her fleas —  
The rajah whines to the pukka's pup,  
And there's dirt in the Narrow Seas!*

From Hell to Nome the blow went home where the Cock-  
roach struck his foe,

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

From Nome to Hell the mongeese yell as they see the black  
blood flow;

The hawsers snort from the firing port as the conning  
chains give way

And the chukkers roar till they rouse the boar on the  
hills of Mandalay; —

And the Cockroach said as he tilted his head: “Now, luff!  
you beggars, luff!

Begod,” says he, “it is easy to see ye cannot swallow my  
duff!

I have tickled ye, I have pickled ye, I have scotched your  
mizzen brace,

And the charnel shark in the outer dark shall strip the  
nose from your face —

“Begod,” says he, “it is easy to see that the Narrow Seas  
are mine,

So creep ye home to your lair at Nome and patch your  
guts with twine!

Begod (says he) it is easy to see who rules this bloody  
bight —

Come ye again, my merry men, whenever ye thirst for  
fight! ”

*Half seas over! Stop! She is queasy!*

*The Cockroach has dropped in the stew!*

*Honestly, fellows, this stuff is easy!*

*The trouble's to tell when you're through.*

*Don Marquis*



## THIS SINGING WORLD

### JIM

There was a Boy whose name was Jim;  
His Friends were very good to him.  
They gave him Tea, and Cakes, and Jam,  
And slices of delicious Ham,  
And Chocolate with pink inside  
And little Tricycles to ride,  
And read him Stories through and through,  
And even took him to the Zoo —  
But there it was the dreadful Fate  
Befell him, which I now relate.

You know — at least you ought to know,  
For I have often told you so —  
That Children never are allowed  
To leave their Nurses in a Crowd;  
Now this was Jim's especial Foible,  
He ran away when he was able,  
And on this inauspicious day  
He slipped his hand and ran away!

He hadn't gone a yard when — Bang!  
With open Jaws, a Lion sprang,  
And hungrily began to eat  
The Boy: beginning at his feet.  
Now, just imagine how it feels  
When first your toes and then your heels,  
And then by gradual degrees,  
Your shins and ankles, calves and knees,  
Are slowly eaten, bit by bit.  
No wonder Jim detested it!  
No wonder that he shouted "Hi!"

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

The Honest Keeper heard his cry,  
Though very fat he almost ran  
To help the little gentleman.  
"Ponto!" he ordered as he came  
(For Ponto was the Lion's name),  
"Ponto!" he cried, with angry Frown,  
"Let go, Sir! Down, Sir! Put it down!"  
The Lion made a sudden stop,  
He let the Dainty Morsel drop,  
And slunk reluctant to his Cage,  
Snarling with Disappointed Rage.  
But when he bent him over Jim,  
The Honest Keeper's Eyes were dim.  
The Lion having reached his Head,  
The Miserable Boy was dead!

When Nurse informed his Parents, they  
Were more Concerned than I can say:—  
His Mother, as She dried her eyes,  
Said, "Well—it gives me no surprise,  
He would not do as he was told!"  
His Father, who was self-controlled,  
Bade all the children round attend  
To James's miserable end,  
And always keep a-hold of Nurse  
For fear of finding something worse.

*Hilaire Belloc*

### THE YARN OF THE "NANCY BELL"

'Twas on the shores that round our coast  
From Deal to Ramsgate span  
That I found alone, on a piece of stone,  
An elderly naval man.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,  
And weedy and long was he,  
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,  
In a singular minor key:

“Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,  
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,  
And a bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,  
And the crew of the captain’s gig.”

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,  
Till I really felt afraid;  
For I couldn’t help thinking the man had been drinking,  
And so I simply said:

“Oh, elderly man, it’s little I know  
Of the duties of men of the sea,  
And I’ll eat my hand if I understand  
How you can possibly be

“At once a cook, and a captain bold,  
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,  
And a bo’sun tight and a midshipmite,  
And the crew of the captain’s gig.”

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which  
Is a trick all seamen larn,  
And having got rid of a thumping quid,  
He spun this painful yarn:

“’Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*  
That we sailed to the Indian sea,  
And there on a reef we come to grief,  
Which has often occurred to me.

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

“ And pretty nigh all o’ the crew was drowned  
    (There was seventy-seven o’ soul),  
And only ten of the *Nancy’s* men  
    Said ‘ Here! ’ to the muster roll.

“ There was me and the cook and the captain bold,  
    And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,  
And the bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,  
    And the crew of the captain’s gig.

“ For a month we’d neither wittles nor drink,  
    Till a-hungry we did feel,  
So, we drewed a lot, and, accordin’ shot,  
    The captain for our meal.

“ The next lot fell to the *Nancy’s* mate,  
    And a delicate dish he made;  
Then our appetite with the midshipmite  
    We seven survivors stayed.

“ And then we murdered the bo’sun tight,  
    And he much resembled pig;  
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,  
    On the crew of the captain’s gig.

“ Then only the cook and me was left,  
    And the delicate question, ‘ Which  
Of us two goes to the kettle? ’ arose,  
    And we argued it out as sich.

“ For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,  
    And the cook he worshipped me;  
But we’d both be blowed if we’d either be stowed  
    In the other chap’s hold, you see.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

" 'I'll be eat if you dines off me,' says Tom,  
    ' Yes, that,' says I, ' you'll be,' —  
' I'm boiled if I die, my friend,' quoth I,  
    And ' Exactly so,' quoth he.

" Says he, ' Dear James, to murder me  
    Were a foolish thing to do,  
For don't you see that you can't cook *me*,  
    While I can — and will — cook you! '

" So, he boils the water, and takes the salt  
    And the pepper in portions true  
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shallot,  
    And some sage and parsley too.

" ' Come here,' says he, with a proper pride,  
    Which his smiling features tell,  
' T will soothing be if I let you see  
    How extremely nice you'll smell.'

" And he stirred it round and round and round,  
    And he sniffed at the foaming froth;  
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals  
    In the scum of the boiling broth.

" And I eat that cook in a week or less,  
    And — as I eating be  
The last of his chops, why I almost drops,  
    For a vessel in sight I see.

. . . . .

" And I never larf, and I never smile,  
    And I never lark nor play,  
But I sit and croak, and a single joke  
    I have — which is to say:

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

“ Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,  
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,  
And a bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,  
And the crew of the captain’s gig! ”

*W. S. Gilbert*

### ELLEN McJONES ABERDEEN

Macphairson Clonglocketty Angus McClan  
Was the son of an elderly labouring man;  
You’ve guessed him a Scotchman, shrewd reader, at sight,  
And p’raps altogether, shrewd reader, you’re right.

From the bonnie blue Forth to the beastly Deeside,  
Round by Dingwall and Wrath to the mouth of the Clyde,  
There wasn’t a child or a woman or man  
Who could pipe with Clonglocketty Angus McClan.

No other could wake such destestable groans,  
With reed and with chaunter <sup>1</sup> — with bag and with  
drones: <sup>2</sup>

All day and all night he delighted the chiefs  
With sniggering pibrochs <sup>3</sup> and jiggety reels.

He’d clamber a mountain and squat on the ground,  
And the neighbouring maidens would gather around  
To list to his pipes and to gaze in his een,  
Especially Ellen McJones Aberdeen.

<sup>1</sup> The shrill, tenor pipe in the bagpipe.

<sup>2</sup> The large tube of the bagpipe that gives the deep, droning sound.

<sup>3</sup> A wild, exciting music.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

All loved their McClan, save a Sassenach <sup>4</sup> brute,  
Who came to the Highlands to fish and to shoot;  
He dressed himself up in a Highlander way;  
Tho' his name it was Pattison Corby Torbay.

Torbay had incurred a good deal of expense  
To make him a Scotchman in every sense;  
But this is a matter, you'll readily own,  
That isn't a question of tailors alone.

A Sassenach chief may be bonily built,  
He may purchase a sporran,<sup>5</sup> a bonnet, and kilt;  
Stick a skean <sup>6</sup> in his hose — wear an acre of stripes —  
But he cannot assume an affection for pipes.

Clongloketty's pipings all night and all day  
Quite frenzied poor Pattison Corby Torbay;  
The girls were amused at his singular spleen,  
Especially Ellen McJones Aberdeen.

"Macphairson Clongloketty Angus, my lad,  
With pibrochs and reels you are driving me mad.  
If you really must play on that cursed affair,  
My goodness! play something resembling an air."

Boiled over the blood of Macphairson McClan —  
The Clan of Clongloketty rose as one man;  
For all were enraged at the insult, I ween —  
Especially Ellen McJones Aberdeen.

"Let's show," said McClan, "to this Sassenach loon  
That the bagpipes can play him a regular tune.  
Let's see," said McClan, as he thoughtfully sat,  
"'*In my Cottage*' is easy — I'll practise at that."

<sup>4</sup> A Saxon: an Englishman.

<sup>5</sup> The furry pouch worn by Highlanders in front of the kilt

<sup>6</sup> A short sword.

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

He blew at his "Cottage," and blew with a will,  
For a year, seven months, and a fortnight, until  
(You'll hardly believe it!) McClan, I declare,  
Elicited something resembling an air.

It was wild — it was fitful — as wild as the breeze —  
It wandered about into several keys;  
It was jerky, spasmodic, and harsh, I'm aware;  
But still it distinctly suggested an air!

The Sassenach screamed, and the Sassenach danced,  
He shrieked in his agony — bellowed and pranced  
And the maidens who gathered rejoiced at the scene,  
Especially Ellen McJones Aberdeen.

"Hech gather, hech gather, hech gather around;  
And fill a' ye lugs wi' the exquisite sound.  
An air fra' the bagpipes — beat that if ye can:  
Hurrah for Clongloketty Angus McClan!"

The fame of his piping spread over the land:  
Respectable widows proposed for his hand,  
And maidens came flocking to sit on the green —  
Especially Ellen McJones Aberdeen.

One morning the fidgetty Sassenach swore  
He'd stand it no longer — he drew his claymore,<sup>1</sup>  
And (this was, I think, extremely bad taste)  
Divided Clongloketty close to the waist.

Oh! loud were the wailings for Angus McClan,  
Oh! deep was the grief for that excellent man —  
The maids stood aghast at the horrible scene,  
Especially Ellen McJones Aberdeen.

<sup>1</sup> A large, double-edged sword.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

It sorrowed poor Pattison Corby Torbay  
To find them "take on" in this serious way;  
He pitied the poor little fluttering birds,  
And solaced their souls with the following words: —

"Oh, maidens," said Pattison, touching his hat,  
"Don't blubber, my dears, for a fellow like that;  
Observe I'm a very superior man,  
A much better fellow than Angus McClan."

They smiled when he winked and addressed them as  
"dears,"

And they all of them vowed, as they dried up their tears,  
A pleasanter gentleman never was seen —  
Especially Ellen McJones Aberdeen.

*W. S. Gilbert*

## THE DARNED MOUNSEER

I shipped, d'ye see, in a Revenue sloop,  
And, off Cape Finistere,  
A merchantman we see,  
A Frenchman, going free,  
So we made for the bold Mounseer.  
D'ye see?

We made for the bold Mounseer!  
But she proved to be a Frigate — and she up with her  
ports,  
And fires with a thirty-two!  
It come uncommon near,  
But we answered with a cheer,  
Which paralysed the Parley-voo,  
D'ye see?  
Which paralysed the Parley-voo!

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

Then our Captain he up and he says, says he,

“ That chap we need not fear, —

We can take her, if we like,

She is sartin for to strike,

For she's only a darned Mounseer,

D'ye see?

She's only a darned Mounseer!

But to fight a French fal-lal! — it's like hittin' of a gal —

It's a lubberly thing for to do;

For we, with all our faults,

Why, we're sturdy British salts,

While she's but a Parley-voo,

D'ye see?

A miserable Parley-voo! ”

So we up with our helm, and we scuds before the breeze,

As we gives a compassionating cheer;

Froggee answers with a shout

As he sees us go about,

Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer,

D'ye see?

Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer!

And I'll wager in their joy they kissed each other's cheek

(Which is what them furriners do),

And they blessed their lucky stars

We were hardy British tars

Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo,

D'ye see?

Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo!

*W. S. Gilbert*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

The Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair!  
Bishop and abbot and prior were there;  
Many a monk, and many a friar,  
Many a knight, and many a squire,  
With a great many more of lesser degree, —  
In sooth a goodly company;  
And they served the Lord Primate on bended knee.

Never, I ween, Was a prouder seen,  
Read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams,  
Than the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims!

In and out, through the motley rout,  
That little Jackdaw kept hopping about;  
Here and there Like a dog in a fair,  
Over comfits and cakes, And dishes and plates,  
Cowl and cope, and rochet and pall,  
Mitre and crosier! he hopp'd upon all!

With a saucy air, He perch'd on the chair  
Where, in state, the great Lord Cardinal sat  
In the great Lord Cardinal's great red hat;  
And he peer'd in the face Of his Lordship's Grace.  
With a satisfied look, as if he would say,  
'We two are the greatest folks here today!'

And the priests, with awe, As such freaks they saw,  
Said, 'The Devil must be in that little Jackdaw!'  
The feast was over, the board was clear'd,  
The flawns and the custards had all disappear'd,  
And six little Singing-boys, — dear little souls!  
In nice clean faces, and nice white stoles,  
Came, in order due, Two by two,  
Marching that grand refectory through!

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

A nice little boy held a golden ewer,  
Emboss'd and fill'd with water, as pure  
As any that flows between Rheims and Namur,  
Which a nice little boy stood ready to catch  
In a fine golden hand-basin made to match.  
Two nice little boys, rather more grown,  
Carried lavender-water and eau de Cologne;  
And a nice little boy had a nice cake of soap,  
Worthy of washing the hands of the Pope.

One little boy more A napkin bore,  
Of the best white diaper, fringed with pink,  
And a Cardinal's Hat mark'd in permanent ink.

The great Lord Cardinal turns at the sight  
Of these nice little boys dress'd all in white:

From his finger he draws His costly turquoise;  
And, not thinking at all about little Jackdaws,  
Deposits it straight By the side of his plate,  
While the nice little boys on his Eminence wait;  
Till, when nobody's dreaming of any such thing,  
That little Jackdaw hops off with the ring.

\* \* \* \* \*

There's a cry and a shout, And a deuce of a rout  
And nobody seems to know what they're about,  
But the monks have their pockets all turn'd inside out;

The friars are kneeling, And hunting, and feeling  
The carpet, the floor, and the walls, and the ceiling.

The Cardinal drew Off each plum-colour'd shoe,  
And left his red stockings exposed to the view;

He peeps, and he feels,

In the toes and the heels;

They turn up the dishes, they turn up the plates,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

They take up the poker and poke out the grates,

— They turn up the rugs,

They examine the mugs: —

But, no! — no such thing; —

They can't find the ring!

And the Abbot declared that, 'when nobody twigg'd it,'<sup>1</sup>

Some rascal or other had popp'd in, and prigg'd it!'<sup>2</sup>

The Cardinal rose with a dignified look,

He call'd for his candle, his bell, and his book!

In holy anger, and pious grief,

He solemnly cursed that rascally thief!

He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed;

From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head;

He cursed him in sleeping, that every night

He should dream of the devil, and wake in a fright;

He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in drinking;

He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, in winking;

He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in lying;

He cursed him in walking, in riding, in flying;

He cursed him in living, he cursed him in dying! —

Never was heard such a terrible curse!

But what gave rise To no little surprise,

Nobody seemed one penny the worse!

The day was gone. The night came on,

The Monks and the Friars they search'd till dawn:

When the Sacristan saw, On crumpled claw,

Come limping a poor little lame Jackdaw;

No longer gay, As on yesterday;

His feathers all seem'd to be turn'd the wrong way; —

His pinions droop'd, he could hardly stand,

<sup>1</sup> Noticed it.

<sup>2</sup> Stolen it.

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

His head was as bald as the palm of your hand;  
His eyes so dim, So wasted each limb,  
That, heedless of grammar, they all cried, ' That's him! —.  
That's the scamp that has done this scandalous thing!  
That's the thief that has got my Lord Cardinal's Ring! '

The poor little Jackdaw, When the monks he saw,  
Feebly gave vent to the ghost of a caw;  
And turn'd his bald head, as much as to say,  
' Pray, be so good as to walk this way! '  
Slower and slower, He limp'd on before,  
Till they came to the back of the belfry door,  
Where the first thing they saw, 'Midst the sticks and the  
straw,  
Was the ring in the nest of that little Jackdaw!

Then the great Lord Cardinal call'd for his book,  
And off that terrible curse he took;

The mute expression Served in lieu of confession,  
And, being thus coupled with full restitution,  
The Jackdaw got plenary absolution!

When those words were heard, That poor little bird  
Was so changed in a moment, 'twas really absurd.

He grew sleek, and fat; In addition to that,  
A fresh crop of feathers came thick as a mat!

His tail waggled more Even than before;  
But no longer it wagg'd with an impudent air,  
No longer he perch'd on the Cardinal's chair.

He hopp'd now about With a gait devout;  
At Matins, at Vespers, he was never out;  
And, so far from any more pilfering deeds,  
He always seem'd telling the Confessor's beads.  
If any one lied, — or if any one swore, —  
Or slumber'd in prayer-time and happened to snore,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

That good Jackdaw Would give a great 'Caw,'  
As much as to say, 'Don't do so no more!'  
While many remark'd as his manners they saw,  
That they 'never had known such a pious Jackdaw!'

He long lived the pride Of that country side,  
And at last in the odour of sanctity died;

When, as words were too faint, His merits to paint  
The Conclave determined to make him a Saint!  
And on newly-made Saints and Popes, as you know,  
It's the custom at Rome, new names to bestow,  
So they canonised him by the name of Jim Crow!

(From *The Ingoldsby Legends*)

*Richard Harris Barham*

## THE CRUEL MOON

The cruel Moon hangs out of reach  
Up above the shadowy beech.  
Her face is stupid, but her eye  
Is small and sharp and very sly.  
Nurse says the Moon can drive you mad?  
No, that's a silly story, lad!  
Though she be angry, though she would  
Destroy all England if she could  
Yet think, what damage can she do  
Hanging there so far from you?  
Don't heed what frightened nurses say:  
Moons hang much too far away.

*Robert Graves*

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

### SONG AGAINST CHILDREN<sup>1</sup>

O the barberry bright, the barberry bright!  
It stood on the mantelpiece because of the height.  
Its stems were slender and thorny and tall  
And it looked most beautiful against the grey wall.  
But Michael climbed up there in spite of the height  
And he ate all the berries off the barberry bright.

O the round holly wreath, the round holly wreath!  
It hung in the window with ivy beneath.  
It was plump and prosperous, spangled with red  
And I thought it would cheer me although I were dead.  
But Deborah climbed on a table beneath  
And she ate all the berries off the round holly wreath.

O the mistletoe bough, the mistletoe bough!  
Could anyone touch it? I did not see how.  
I hung it up high that it might last long,  
I wreathed it with ribbons and hailed it with song.  
But Christopher reached it, I do not know how,  
And he ate all the berries off the mistletoe bough.

*Aline Kilmer*

### FAITHLESS NELLY GRAY

Ben Battle was a soldier bold,  
And used to war's alarms;  
But a cannon-ball took off his legs,  
So he laid down his arms!

<sup>1</sup> From *Vigils* by Aline Kilmer. Copyright, 1921, George H Doran Company, Publishers.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Now, as they bore him off the field,  
Said he, "Let others shoot,  
For here I leave my second leg,  
And the Forty-second Foot!"

The army surgeons made him limbs:  
Said he, "They're only pegs:  
But there's as wooden members quite  
As represent my legs!"

Now, Ben he loved a pretty maid,  
Her name was Nelly Gray;  
So he went to pay his devours,<sup>1</sup>  
When he devoured his pay!

But when he called on Nelly Gray,  
She made him quite a scoff;  
And when she saw his wooden legs,  
Began to take them off! <sup>2</sup>

"O Nelly Gray! O Nelly Gray!  
Is this your love so warm?  
The love that loves a scarlet coat  
Should be more uniform!"

Said she, "I loved a soldier once,  
For he was blithe and brave;  
But I will never have a man  
With both legs in the grave!

"Before you had those timber toes,  
Your love I did allow,  
But then, you know, you stand upon  
Another footing now!"

<sup>1</sup> Devotion.

<sup>2</sup> Slang for "make fun of them."

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

"O Nelly Gray! O Nelly Gray!

For all your jeering speeches,  
At duty's call I left my legs  
In Badajos's *breaches!*"

"Why, then," said she, "you've lost the feet  
Of legs in war's alarms,  
And now you can not wear your shoes  
Upon your feats of arms!"

"O false and fickle Nelly Gray!  
I know why you refuse: —  
Though I've no feet — some other man  
Is standing in my shoes!

"I wish I ne'er had seen your face;  
But now, a long farewell!  
For you will be my death; — alas,  
You will not be my *Nell!*"

Now, when he went from Nelly Gray,  
His heart so heavy got  
And life was such a burden grown,  
It made him take a knot!

So round his melancholy neck  
A rope he did entwine,  
And, for his second time in life,  
Enlisted in the Line!

One end he tied around a beam,  
And then removed his pegs,  
And, as his legs were off — of course,  
He soon was off his legs!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or "in hard luck."

## THIS SINGING WORLD

And there he hung, till he was dead  
As any nail in town,—  
For, though distress had cut him up,  
It could not cut him down!

A dozen men sat on his corpse,  
To find out why he died—  
And they buried Ben in four cross-roads,  
With a *stake* in his inside!

*Thomas Hood*

## THE MILK JUG

*(The Kitten Speaks)*

The Gentle Milk Jug blue and white  
I love with all my soul  
She pours herself with all her might  
To fill my breakfast bowl.

All day she sits upon the shelf,  
She does not jump or climb—  
She only waits to pour herself  
When 'tis my supper-time.

And when the Jug is empty quite,  
I shall not mew in vain,  
The Friendly Cow, all red and white,  
Will fill her up again.

*Oliver Herford*

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

### DE APPILE TREE

Dat's a mighty quare tale 'bout de Appile-tree  
In de Pa'dise gyarden whar Adam run free,  
Whar de butterflies drunk honey wid ol' Mammy Bee.  
Talk 'bout good times! I bet you he had 'em —

Adam —

Ol' man Adam un' de Appile-tree.

He woke one mornin' wid a pullin' at his sleeve;  
He open one eye, an' dar wuz Eve;  
He shuck her han', wid "Honey, don't you grieve!"  
Talk 'bout good times! I bet you dey had 'em —

Adam —

Adam an' Eve un' de Appile-tree.

Den Eve tuck a bite er de Appile fruit,  
An' Adam he bit, an' den dey scoot  
(Dar's whar de niggers l'arned de quick callyhoot),  
An' run an' hid behime de fig-tree.  
Talk about troubles! I bet you dey had 'em —

Adam —

Adam an' Eve behime de fig-tree.

Dey had der frolics an' dey had der flings,  
An' den atter dat der fun tuck wings.  
Honey mighty sweet, but bees got stings.  
Talk about hard times! I bet you dey had 'em —

Adam —

Adam an' Eve behime de fig-tree.

Kaze out er dat gyarden dey had fer ter skin,  
Fer ter look fer de crack whar Satan crope in.  
Dey s'arch fur an wide, an' dey s'arch mighty well —

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Eve she knowed, but she 'fuse fer ter tell.  
Ol' Satan's trail wuz all rubbed out,  
Ceppin' a track er two whar he walked about.  
Talk about troubles! Well, I bet you dey had 'em —  
Adam —

Adam an' Eve an' all der kin.

An' when dey got back, de gate wuz shot,  
An' dat wuz de pay what Adam got.  
In dat gyarden he went no mo';  
De overseer gi' 'im a shovel an' a hoe,  
A mule an' plow, an' a singletree.<sup>1</sup>  
Talk about hard times! I bet you dey had 'em —  
Adam —

An' all er his chillun, bofe slave an' free;  
Dey had 'em —  
Bekaze er de fruit er de Appile-tree.

An' de chillun er Adam, an' de chillun's kin,  
Dey all got smeared wid de pitch er Sin;  
Dey shot der eyes ter de big hereatter,  
An' flung Sin aroun' wid a tur'ble splatter,  
An' colloqued wid Satan, an' dat what de matter.  
An' troubles — well, I bet you dey had 'em —  
Adam —

De chillun er Adam dat fergit ter pray —  
Dey had 'em —  
An' dey keep on a-had'n 'em down ter dis day!

But dat wa'n't de last er de Appile-tree,  
Kaze she scatter her seeds bofe fur an' free,  
An' dat's what de matter wid you an' me.  
I knows de feelin's what fotch on de Fall,

<sup>1</sup> Same as singletree or whiffletree; part of a horse's harness.

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

De red Appile an' ol' Satan's call —  
Lor' bless yo' soul, I knows um all!  
I'm kinder lopsided an' pidjin-toed,  
But watch me keep in de middle er de road,  
Kaze de troubles I got is a mighty big load.  
Talk about troubles! I got um an' had um,  
An' I know mighty well dat I cotch um fum Adam  
An' de Appile-seeds what he scatter so free —  
Adam —

Adam an' Eve an' de Appile-tree.

*Joel Chandler Harris*

## LILLIPUT LEVEE

Where does Pinafore Palace stand?  
Right in the middle of Lilliput-Land!  
There the Queen eats bread-and-honey,  
There the King counts up his money!

Oh, the Glorious Revolution!  
Oh, the Provisional Constitution!  
Now that the children, clever bold folks,  
Have turned the tables upon the Old Folks!

Easily the thing was done,  
For the children were more than two to one;  
Brave as lions, quick as foxes,  
With hoards of wealth in their money-boxes!

They seized the keys, they patrolled the street,  
They drove the policeman off his beat,  
They built barricades, they stationed sentries —  
You must give the word, when you come to the entries!

## THIS SINGING WORLD

They dressed themselves in the Riflemen's clothes,  
They had pea-shooters, they had arrows and bows,  
So as to put resistance down —  
Order reigns in Lilliput-town!

They made the baker bake hot rolls;  
They made the wharfinger send in coals,  
They made the butcher kill the calf,  
They cut the telegraph-wires in half.

They went to the chemist's, and with their feet  
They kicked the physic all down the street;  
They went to the school-room and tore the books,  
They munched the puffs at the pastrycook's.

They sucked the jam, they lost the spoons,  
They sent up several fire-balloons,  
They let off crackers, they burnt a guy,  
They piled a bonfire ever so high.

They offered a prize for the laziest boy,  
And one for the most Magnificent toy;  
They split or burnt the canes offhand,  
They made new laws in Lilliput-land.

*Never do to-day what you can*  
*Put off till to-morrow*, one of them ran;  
*Late to bed and late to rise*  
Was another law which they did devise.

They passed a law to have always plenty  
Of beautiful things: we shall mention twenty:  
A magic lantern for all to see,  
Rabbits to keep, and a Christmas-tree,

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

A boat, a house that went on wheels,  
An organ to grind, and sherry at meals,  
Drums and wheelbarrows, Roman candles,  
Whips with whistles let into the handles,

A real live giant, a roc to fly,  
A goat to tease, a copper to shy,  
A garret of apples, a box of paints,  
A saw and a hammer, and no complaints.

Nail up the door, slide down the stairs,  
Saw off the legs of the parlor chairs —  
That was the way in Lilliput-land,  
The children having the upper hand.

They made the Old Folks come to school,  
And in pinafores, — that was the rule, —  
Saying, *Eener-deener-diner-duss*,  
*Kattler-wheeler-whiler-wuss*;

They made them learn all sorts of things  
That nobody liked. They had catechisings;  
They kept them in, they sent them down  
In class, in school, in Lilliput-town.

O but they gave them tit-for-tat!  
Thick bread-and-butter, and all that;  
Stick-jaw pudding that tires your chin,  
With the marmalade spread ever so thin!

They governed the clock in Lilliput-land,  
They altered the hour or the minute-hand,  
They made the day fast, they made the day slow,  
Just as they wished the time to go.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

They never waited for king or for cat;  
They never wiped their shoes on the mat;  
Their joy was great; their joy was greater;  
They rode in the baby's perambulator!

There was a Levee in Lilliput-town,  
At Pinafore Palace. Smith and Brown,  
Jones and Robinson had to attend —  
All to whom they cards did send.

Every one rode in a cab to the door;  
Every one came in a pinafore;  
Lady and gentleman, rat-tat-tat,  
Loud knock, proud knock, opera hat!

The place was covered with silver and gold,  
The place was as full as it ever could hold;  
The ladies kissed her Majesty's hand,  
Such was the custom in Lilliput-land.

His Majesty knighted eight or ten,  
Perhaps a score, of the gentlemen,  
Some of them short and some of them tall —  
*Arise, Sir What's-a-name What-do-you-call!*

Conjuring tricks with the poker and tongs,  
Riddles and forfeits, singing of songs;  
One fat man, too fat by far,  
Tried "Twinkle, twinkle, little star."

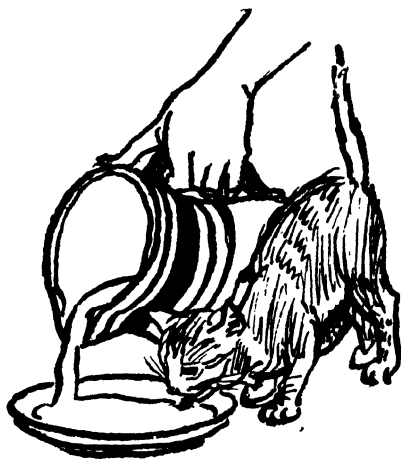
His voice was gruff, his pinafore tight,  
His wife said, "Mind, dear, sing it right,"  
But he forgot, and said Fa-la-la!  
The Queen of Lilliput's own papa!

## LAUGHING LEGENDS

She frowned, and ordered him up to bed:  
He said he was sorry; she shook her head;  
His clean shirt-front with his tears was stained —  
But discipline *had* to be maintained.

The Constitution! The Law! The Crown!  
Order reigns in Lilliput-town!  
The Queen is Jill, the King is John.  
I trust the Government will get on.

*William Brighty Rands*





*FABLES IN FOOLSCAP*



## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

### THE ENCHANTED SHIRT

*Fytte ye Firste: wherein it shall be shown how ye Truth  
is too mightie a Drugge for such as be of feeble temper.*

The King was sick. His cheek was red  
And his eye was clear and bright;  
He ate and drank with a kingly zest,  
And peacefully snored at night.

But he said he was sick, and a king should know,  
And doctors came by the score.  
They did not cure him. He cut off their heads  
And sent to the schools for more.

At last two famous doctors came,  
And one was as poor as a rat,—  
He had passed his life in studious toil,  
And never found time to grow fat.

The other had never looked in a book;  
His patients gave him no trouble,  
If they recovered they paid him well,  
If they died their heirs paid double.

Together they looked at the royal tongue,  
As the King on his couch reclined;  
In succession they thumped his august chest,  
But no trace of disease could find.

The old sage said, "You're as sound as a nut."  
"Hang him up," roared the King in a gale,  
In a ten-knot gale of royal rage;  
The other leech grew a shade pale;

## THIS SINGING WORLD

But he pensively rubbed his sagacious nose,  
And thus his prescription ran, —  
The King will be well, if he sleeps one night  
In the Shirt of a Happy Man.

*Fytte ye Seconde: telleth of ye search for ye Shirte and  
how it was nighe founde but was notte, for reasons  
which are sayd or sung.*

Wide o'er the realm the couriers rode,  
And fast their horses ran,  
And many they saw, and to many they spoke,  
But they found no Happy Man.

They found poor men who would fain be rich,  
And rich who thought they were poor;  
And men who twisted their waists in stays,  
And women that short hose wore.

They saw two men by the roadside sit,  
And both bemoaned their lot;  
For one had buried his wife, he said,  
And the other one had not.

At last as they came to a village gate,  
A beggar lay whistling there;  
He whistled and sang and laughed and rolled  
On the grass in the soft June air.

The weary couriers paused and looked  
At the scamp so blithe and gay;  
And one of them said, "Heaven save you, friend!  
You seem to be happy to-day."

## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

"O yes, fair sirs," the rascal laughed  
And his voice rang free and glad,  
"An idle man has so much to do  
That he never has time to be sad."

"This is our man," the courier said;  
"Our luck has led us aright.  
"I will give you a hundred ducats, friend,  
For the loan of your shirt to-night."

The merry blackguard lay back on the grass,  
And laughed till his face was black;  
"I would do it, God wot," and he roared with the fun  
"But I haven't a shirt to my back."

*Fytte ye Thirde: Shewing how Hys Majestie ye King came  
at last to sleepe in a Happie Man his Shirte.*

Each day to the King the reports came in  
Of his unsuccessful spies,  
And the sad panorama of human woes  
Passed daily under his eyes.

And he grew ashamed of his useless life,  
And his maladies hatched in gloom;  
He opened his windows and let the air  
Of the free heaven into his room.

And out he went in the world and toiled  
In his own appointed way;  
And the people blessed him, the land was glad,  
And the King was well and gay.

*John Hay*



# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THE CAP THAT FITS

SCENE. — *A Salon with blue and white Panels. Outside, persons pass and re-pass upon a terrace.*

HORTENSE.      ARMANDE.      MONSIEUR LOYAL.

HORTENSE (*behind her fan*)

Not young, I think.

ARMANDE (*raising her eye-glass*)

And faded, too: —

*Quite* faded! Monsieur, what say you?

M. LOYAL

Nay, I defer to you. In truth,  
To me she seems all grace and youth.

HORTENSE

Graceful? You think it? What, with hands  
That hang like this (*with a gesture*).

ARMANDE

And how she stands!

M. LOYAL

Nay, I am wrong again. I thought  
Her air delightfully untaught!

HORTENSE

But you amuse me —

M. LOYAL

Still her dress, —

Her dress at least, you *must* confess —

ARMANDE

Is odious simply! Jacotot  
Did not supply that lace, I know;  
And where, I ask, has mortal seen  
A hat unfeathered!





## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

HORTENSE

Edged with green!

M. LOYAL

The words remind me. Let me say

A Fable that I heard to-day.

Have I permission?

BOTH (*with enthusiasm*)

Monsieur, pray.

M. LOYAL

*Myrtilla (lest a Scandal rise,*

*The Lady's Name I thus disguise),*

*Dying of Ennui, once decided, —*

*Much on Resource herself she prided, —*

*To choose a Hat. Forthwith she flies*

*On that momentous Enterprise.*

*Whether to Petit or Legros,*

*I know not: only this I know; —*

*Head-dresses then, of any Fashion,*

*Bore Names of Quality or Passion.*

*Myrtilla tried them, almost all;*

*"Prudence," she felt, was somewhat small;*

*"Retirement" seemed the Eyes to hide;*

*"Content," at once, she cast aside.*

*"Simplicity," — 'twas out of place;*

*"Devotion," — for an older face:*

*Briefly, Selection smaller grew,*

*"Vexatious! odious!" — none would do!*

*Then, on a sudden, she espied*

*One that she thought she had not tried;*

*Becoming, rather, — "edged with green," —*

*Roses in yellow, Thorns between.*

*"Quick! Bring me that!" 'Tis brought. "Complete,*

*Divine, Enchanting, Tasteful, Neat,"*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

*In all the Tones. "And this you call — ?"*

" 'ILL-NATURE,' Madame. It fits all."

HORTENSE

A thousand thanks! So naïvely turned!

ARMANDE

So useful too, — to those concerned!

'Tis yours?

M. LOYAL

Ah no, — some cynic wit's;

And called (I think) —

*(Placing his hat upon his breast.)*

"The Cap that Fits."

*Austin Dobson*

## THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

*(A Hindoo Fable)*

It was six men of Indostan

To learning much inclined,

Who went to see the Elephant

(Though all of them were blind),

That each by observation

Might satisfy his mind.

The *First* approached the Elephant,

And happening to fall

Against his broad and sturdy side,

At once began to bawl:

"God bless me! but the Elephant

Is very like a wall!"

## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

The *Second*, feeling of the tusk,  
Cried, "Ho! what have we here  
So very round and smooth and sharp?  
To me 'tis mighty clear  
This wonder of an Elephant  
Is very like a spear!"

The *Third* approached the animal,  
And happening to take  
The squirming trunk within his hands,  
Thus boldly up and spake:  
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant  
Is very like a snake!"

The *Fourth* reached out an eager hand,  
And felt about the knee.  
"What most this wondrous beast is like  
Is mighty plain," quoth he;  
"'Tis clear enough the Elephant  
Is very like a tree!"

The *Fifth* who chanced to touch the ear,  
Said: "E'en the blindest man  
Can tell what this resembles most;  
Deny the fact who can,  
This marvel of an Elephant  
Is very like a fan!"

The *Sixth* no sooner had begun  
About the beast to grope,  
Than, seizing on the swinging tail  
That fell within his scope,  
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant  
Is very like a rope!"

## THIS SINGING WORLD

And so these men of Indostan  
Disputed loud and long,  
Each in his own opinion  
Exceeding stiff and strong,  
Though each was partly in the right,  
And all were in the wrong!

### *Moral*

So oft in theologic wars,  
The disputants, I ween,  
Rail on in utter ignorance  
Of what the others mean,  
*And prate about an Elephant*  
*Not one of them has seen!*

*John Godfrey Saxe*

## THE VAINGLORIOUS OAK AND THE MODEST BULRUSH<sup>1</sup>

A bulrush stood on a river's rim,  
And an oak that grew near by  
Looked down with cold hauteur on him,  
And addressed him this way: "Hi!"  
The rush was a proud patrician, and  
He retorted, "Don't you know,  
What the veriest boor should understand,  
That 'Hi' is low?"

This cutting rebuke the oak ignored.  
He returned, "My slender friend,

<sup>1</sup> From *Fables for the Frivolous* by Guy Wetmore Carryl.  
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## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

I will frankly state that I'm somewhat bored  
With the way you bow and bend."

"But you quite forget," the rush replied,

"It's an art these bows to do,  
An art I wouldn't attempt if I'd  
Such boughs as you."

"Of course," said the oak, "in my sapling days  
My habit it was to bow,  
But the wildest storm that the winds could raise  
Would never disturb me now.

I challenge the breeze to make me bend,  
And the blast to make me sway."

The shrewd little bulrush answered, "Friend,  
Don't get so gay."

And the words had barely left his mouth

When he saw the oak turn pale,  
For, racing along south-east-by-south,  
Came ripping a raging gale.

And the rush bent low as the storm went past,  
But stiffly stood the oak,  
Though not for long, for he found the blast  
No idle joke.

\* \* \* \* \*

Imagine the lightning's gleaming bars,

Imagine the thunder's roar,  
For that is exactly what eight stars  
Are set in a row here for!

The oak lay prone when the storm was done,

While the rush, still quite erect,  
Remarked aside, "What under the sun  
Could one expect?"



## THIS SINGING WORLD

And *The Moral*, I'd have you understand,  
Would have made La Fontaine blush,  
For it's this: Some storms come early, and  
Avoid the rush!

*Guy Wetmore Carryl*

### THE EMBARRASSING EPISODE OF LITTLE MISS MUFFET <sup>1</sup>

Little Miss Muffet discovered a tuffet,  
(Which never occurred to the rest of us)  
And, as 'twas a June day, and just about noonday,  
She wanted to eat—like the best of us:  
Her diet was whey, and I hasten to say  
It is wholesome and people grow fat on it.  
The spot being lonely, the lady not only  
Discovered the tuffet, but sat on it.

A rivulet gabbled beside her and babbled,  
As rivulets always are thought to do,  
And dragon-flies sported around and cavorted,  
As poets say dragon-flies ought to do;  
When, glancing aside for a moment, she spied  
A horrible sight that brought fear to her,  
A hideous spider was sitting beside her,  
And most unavoidably near to her!

Albeit unsightly, this creature politely  
Said: "Madam, I earnestly vow to you,  
I'm penitent that I did not bring my hat. I  
Should otherwise certainly bow to you."

<sup>1</sup> From *Mother Goose for Grown-Ups* by Guy Wetmore Carryl.  
Copyright, 1900, Harper & Brothers.

## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

Though anxious to please, he was so ill at ease  
That he lost all his sense of propriety,  
And grew so inept that he clumsily stepped  
In her plate — which is barred in Society.

This curious error completed her terror;  
She shuddered, and growing much paler, not  
Only left tuffet, but dealt him a buffet  
Which doubled him up in a sailor-knot.  
It should be explained that at this he was pained:  
He cried: "I have vexed you, no doubt of it!  
Your fist's like a truncheon." "You're still in my  
luncheon,"  
Was all that she answered. "Get out of it!"

And *The Moral* is this: Be it madam or miss  
To whom you have something to say,  
You are only absurd when you get in the curd  
But you're rude when you get in the whey!  
*Guy Wetmore Carryl*

## HENRY KING

The Chief Defect of Henry King  
Was chewing little bits of String.  
At last he swallowed some which tied  
Itself in ugly Knots inside.

Physicians of the Utmost Fame  
Were called at once; but when they came  
They answered, as they took their Fees,  
"There is no Cure for this Disease.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Henry will very soon be dead."  
His Parents stood about his Bed  
Lamenting his Untimely Death,  
When Henry, with his Latest Breath,

Cried, "Oh, my Friends, be warned by me,  
That Breakfast, Dinner, Lunch, and Tea  
Are all the Human Frame requires . . ."  
With that, the Wretched Child expires.

*Hilaire Belloc*

## LEETLA GIORGIO WASHEENTON

You know w'at for ees school keep out  
Dees holiday, my son?  
Wal, den, I gona tal you 'bout  
Dees Giorgio Washeenton.

Wal, Giorgio was leetla keed  
Ees leeve long time ago,  
An' he gon' school for learn to read  
An' write hees nam', you know.  
He moocha like for gona school  
An' learna hard all day,  
Baycause he no gat time for fool  
Weeth bada keeds an' play.  
Wal, wan cold day w'en Giorgio  
Ees steel so vera small,  
He start from home, but he ees no  
Show up een school at all!  
O! my! hees Pop ees gatta mad  
An' so he tal hees wife:

## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

"Som' leetla boy ees gon' feel bad  
To-day, you bat my life!"  
An' den he grab a beega steeck  
An' gon' out een da snow  
An' lookin' all aroun' for seek  
Da leetla Giorgio.  
Ha! w'at you theenk? Firs' theeng he see  
Where leetla boy he stan',  
All tangla up een cherry tree,  
Weeth hatchet een-hees han'.  
"Ha! w'at you do?" hees Pop he say,  
"W'at for you busta rule  
An' stay away like dees for play  
Eenstead for gon' to school?"  
Da boy ees say: "I no can lie,  
An' so I speaka true.  
I stay away from school for try  
An' gat som' wood for you.  
I theenka deesa cherry tree  
Ees gooda size for chop,  
An' so I cut heem down, you see,  
For justa help my Pop."  
Hees Pop he no can gatta mad,  
But looka please' an say:  
"My leetla boy, I am so glad  
You taka holiday."

Ees good for leetla boy, you see,  
For be so bright an' try  
For help hees Pop; so den he be  
A granda man bimeby.  
So now you gatta holiday  
An' eet ees good, you know,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

For you gon' do da sama way  
Like leetla Giorgio.  
Don't play so mooch, but justa stop,  
Eef you want be som' good,  
An' justa help your poor old Pop  
By carry home some wood;  
An' mebbe so like Giorgio  
You grow for be so great  
You gona be da Presidant  
Of dese Unita State'.

*T. A. Daly*

## HOW BRER TARRYPIN LEARNED TO FLY

Brer Tarrypin tired er prom'nadin' roun',  
An' he lay in de sun right flat on de groun';  
His foots wuz col', an' his eyes wuz red,  
An' it look like sump'in done bunged up his head;  
But he watch Brer Buzzard a-sailin' in de sky,  
An' he wisht fum his heart dat he could fly —  
Fil-a-ma-looner-leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

He frown an' he grunt, he grunt an' he groan,  
He snuffle an' snuffle, he wheeze an' he moan;  
He drapt a big tear in de acorn-cup,  
An' de bug run out, he gobble 'im up;  
Brer Buzzard flew'd, an' he flew'd mighty high,  
He flop his wings an' he wink his eye —  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

He see Brer Tarrypin layin' flat,  
An' he chuckle ter hisse'f, "Oh-ho! look at dat!  
It's a mighty funny place fer ter make a bed,  
An' he may be sick, an' he may be dead!"

## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

So he drap down slow, an' he drap down sly,  
But Tarrypin watchin' wid his red eye —  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

Buzzard he lit a little up de slope,  
An' hit de gait call de buzzard-lope,  
An' den Brer Tarrypin tuck in his head  
An' lay des like he done gone ter bed.  
Brer Buzzard he holler, "He! he-hi!"  
An' Tarrypin 'spon', "Ah-yi! ah-yi!"  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

"You keep yo-se'f shot up in yo' shell,"  
Brer Buzzard 'low, "but I hope you er well?"  
Brer Tarrypin say he feelin' ez smart  
Ez what a man kin wid a swelled-up heart,  
An' a liver all blue, an' a blood-red eye;  
An' he moaned an' groaned, an' he cried, "Oh, my!"  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

"Better git de doctor!" Brer Buzzard say;  
"He'll kyo you, sho, ef dey's any way."  
"I done been saw 'im," Brer Tarrypin 'low,  
"An' he up an' tol' me dat my onliest how  
Is to fin' somebody dat'll tote me high  
An' turn me loose so I'll l'arn how ter fly" —  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

Brer Buzzard he say, "Why, bless you, chile!  
You kin count on me!" an' he smole a smile.  
"When it comes ter heft you er right smart chunk,  
But I speck I kin tote you" — an' den he wunk.  
"I'll tote you low, an' I'll tote you high;  
I'll tote you past, an' I'll tote you by" —  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

## THIS SINGING WORLD

He ruffle his fedders, an he flop his wings,  
Wid "Dis is de trouble dat frien'ship brings;  
But I'll take it all an' ax fer mo',  
Ef so be I kin git you ter go."

Brer Tarrypin study, an' look at de sky,  
Kaze his heart wuz sot on l'arnin' ter fly —  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

Down on his hunkers Brer Buzzard squot,  
An' on his back Brer Tarrypin got;  
'Twuz slip an' fall, but he got on,  
An' de nex' news you know dey bofe wuz gone!  
A-sailin' low, an' a-sailin' high,  
A-sailin' fur, an' a-sailin' nigh —  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

"Now, how shill I l'arn?" Brer Tarrypin say.  
Brer Buzard 'spon', "I'll show you de way.  
I'm a-flyin' high, but I'll start down,  
Den you turn loose an' sail all roun'."  
Brer Tarrypin say — an' he shot his eye —  
"Ef we go much higher we'll sturb de sky!"  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

Tarrypin turn loose an' down he come,  
Wid a *blip* an' a *blap* an' a *blim-blam-blum*!  
He come wid a squeal, he come wid a squall —  
Dey ain't nobody y'ever had sech a fall!  
An' a mighty good reason: he wuz up so high  
Dat when he hit de groun' he wuz dead, mighty nigh —  
Fil-a-ma-looner leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

Buzzard he foller fer ter see it done well,  
Wid "La, ol' friend'! it seem like you fell!  
An' all you hatter do wuz ter flop yo' wings!"

## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

Tarrypin groan; he say, " By jings!  
I know one thing, an' dat ain't two —  
I know one thing wid my fil-a-ma-loo!  
I know one thing, an' I know it right —  
I know how ter fly, but I dunner how ter light!  
Sump'n n'er tol' me ez I sail in de sky,  
' L'arn how ter light 'fo' you l'arn how ter fly! ' "  
Fil-a-ma-looner-leener! fil-a-ma-leener-li!

*Joel Chandler Harris*

### FABLE

The mountain and the squirrel  
Had a quarrel,  
And the former called the latter " Little Prig; "  
Bun replied,  
" You are doubtless very big;  
But all sorts of things and weather  
Must be taken in together,  
To make up a year  
And a sphere.  
And I think it no disgrace  
To occupy my place.  
If I'm not so large as you,  
You are not so small as I,  
And not half so spry.  
I'll not deny you make  
A very pretty squirrel track.  
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;  
If I cannot carry forests on my back,  
Neither can you crack a nut."

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*



# THIS SINGING WORLD

## IDEALISTS

Brother Tree:

Why do you reach and reach?  
do you dream some day to touch the sky?

Brother Stream:

Why do you run and run?  
do you dream some day to fill the sea?

Brother Bird:

Why do you sing and sing?  
do you dream —

*Young Man:*

*Why do you talk and talk?*

*Alfred Kreymborg*

## THE TREE

I am four monkeys.  
One hangs from a limb,  
tail-wise,  
chattering at the earth;  
another is cramming his belly with cocoanut;  
the third is up in the top branches,  
quizzing the sky;  
and the fourth —  
he's chasing another monkey.

How many monkeys are you?

*Alfred Kreymborg*

## FABLES IN FOOLSCAP

### VOICES

O, there were lights and laughter  
And motions to and fro  
Of people as they enter  
And people as they go... .

And there were many voices  
Vying at the feast,  
But mostly I remember  
Yours — who spoke the least.

*Witter Bynner*





*RHYME WITHOUT REASON*



# RHYME WITHOUT REASON

## TOPSY-TURVY WORLD

If the butterfly courted the bee,  
And the owl the porcupine;  
If churches were built in the sea,  
And three times one was nine;  
If the pony rode his master,  
If the buttercups ate the cows,  
If the cats had the dire disaster  
To be worried, sir, by the mouse;  
If Mamma, sir, sold the baby  
To a gypsy for half a crown;  
If a gentleman, sir, was a lady, —  
The world would be Upside-down!  
If any or all of these wonders  
Should ever come about,  
I should not consider them blunders,  
For I should be Inside-out:

### *Chorus*

Ba-ba, black wool  
Have you any sheep?  
Yes, sir, a packfull,  
Creep, mouse, creep!  
Four-and-twenty little maids  
Hanging out the pie,  
Out jumped the honey-pot,  
Guy Fawkes, Guy!  
Cross latch, cross latch,  
Sit and spin the fire;  
When the pie was opened,  
The bird was on the brier!

*William Brighty Rands*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## BALLAD

### PART I

The auld wife sat at her ivied door,  
    (*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)  
A thing she had frequently done before;  
    And her spectacles lay on her apron'd knees.

The piper he piped on the hill-top high,  
    (*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)  
Till the cow said "I die," and the goose ask'd why?  
    And the dog said nothing, but search'd for fleas.

The farmer he strode through the square farmyard:  
    (*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)  
His last brew of ale was a trifle hard —  
    The connexion of which with the plot one sees.

The farmer's daughter had frank blue eyes;  
    (*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)  
She hears the rooks caw in the windy skies,  
    As she sits at her lattice and shells her peas.

The farmer's daughter hath ripe red lips;  
    (*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)  
If you try to approach her, away she skips  
    Over tables and chairs with apparent ease.

The farmer's daughter hath soft brown hair  
    (*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)  
And I met with a ballad, I can't say where,  
    Which wholly consisted of lines like these.







# RHYME WITHOUT REASON

## PART II

She sat, with her hands 'neath her crimson cheeks,  
    *(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)*  
And spake not a word. While a lady speaks  
    There is hope, but she didn't even sneeze.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her crimson cheeks,  
    *(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)*  
She gave up mending her father's breeks,  
    And let the cat roll in her new chemise.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her burning cheeks,  
    *(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)*  
And gazed at the piper for thirteen weeks;  
    Then she follow'd him out o'er the misty leas.

Her sheep follow'd her, as their tails did them.  
    *(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)*  
And this song is consider'd a perfect gem,  
    And as to the meaning, it's what you please.

*C. S. Calverley*

## THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea  
    In a beautiful pea-green boat,  
They took some honey, and plenty of money,  
    Wrapped up in a five-pound note.  
The Owl looked up to the stars above,  
    And sang to a small guitar,  
'O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,  
    What a beautiful Pussy you are,  
        You are!  
    What a beautiful Pussy you are!'

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Pussy said to the Owl, 'You elegant fowl!  
How charmingly sweet you sing!  
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:  
But what shall we do for a ring?'  
They sailed away for a year and a day,  
To the land where the Bong-tree grows,  
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood,  
With a ring at the end of his nose,  
His nose,  
With a ring at the end of his nose.

'Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling  
Your ring?' Said the Piggy, 'I will.'  
So they took it away, and were married next day  
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.  
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,  
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;  
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,  
They danced by the light of the moon,  
The moon,  
They danced by the light of the moon.

*Edward Lear*

## LITTLE BILLEE

There were three sailors of Bristol city  
Who took a boat and went to sea.  
But first with beef and captain's biscuits  
And pickled pork they loaded she.

There was gorging Jack and guzzling Jimmy,  
And the youngest he was little Billee.  
Now when they got as far as the Equator  
They'd nothing left but one split pea.

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,

“I am extremely hungaree.”

To gorging Jack says guzzling Jimmy,

“We’ve nothing left, us must eat we.”

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,

“With one another we shouldn’t agree!

There’s little Bill, he’s young and tender,

We’re old and tough, so let’s eat he.

“Oh, Billy, we’re going to kill and eat you,

So undo the button of your chemie.”

When Bill received this information

He used his pocket-handkerchie.

“First let me say my catechism,

Which my poor mammy taught to me.”

“Make haste, make haste,” says guzzling Jimmy

While Jack pulled out his snickersnee.

So Billy went up to the main-topgallant mast,

And down he fell on his bended knee.

He scarce had come to the twelfth commandment

When up he jumps. “There’s land I see:

“Jerusalem and Madagascar,

And North and South Amerikee:

There’s the British flag a-riding at anchor,

With Admiral Napier, K. C. B.”

So when they got aboard the Admiral’s

He hanged fat Jack and flogged Jimmee;

But as for little Bill he made him

The captain of a Seventy-three!

*William Makepeace Thackeray*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THE SNARK

(From "*The Hunting of the Snark*")

"Come, listen, my men, while I tell you again  
The five unmistakable marks  
By which you may know, wheresoever you go,  
The warranted genuine Snarks.

"Let us take them in order. The first is the taste,  
Which is meagre and hollow, but crisp:  
Like a coat that is rather too tight in the waist,  
With a flavour of Will-o-the-wisp.

"Its habit of getting up late you'll agree  
That it carries too far, when I say  
That it frequently breakfasts at five-o'clock tea,  
And dines on the following day.

"The third is its slowness in taking a jest.  
Should you happen to venture on one,  
It will sigh like a thing that is deeply distressed:  
And it always looks grave at a pun.

"The fourth is its fondness for bathing-machines,  
Which it constantly carries about,  
And believes that they add to the beauty of scenes —  
A sentiment open to doubt.

"The fifth is ambition. It next will be right  
To describe each particular batch:  
Distinguishing those that have feathers, and bite,  
From those that have whiskers, and scratch.

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

“ For, although common Snarks do no manner of harm,  
Yet I feel it my duty to say  
Some are Boojums — ” The Bellman broke off in alarm,  
For the Baker had fainted away.

*Lewis Carroll*

### THE BAKER'S TALE

*(From “ The Hunting of the Snark ”)*

They roused him with muffins — they roused him with  
ice —

They roused him with mustard and cress —  
They roused him with jam and judicious advice —  
They set him conundrums to guess.

When at length he sat up and was able to speak,  
His sad story he offered to tell;  
And the Bellman cried “ Silence! Not even a shriek! ”  
And excitedly tingled his bell.

There was silence supreme! Not a shriek, not a scream,  
Scarcely even a howl or a groan,  
As the man they called “ Ho! ” told his story of woe  
In an antediluvian tone.

“ My father and mother were honest, though poor — ”

“ Skip all that! ” cried the Bellman in haste.

“ If it once becomes dark, there's no chance of a Snark —  
We have hardly a minute to waste! ”

“ I skip forty years,” said the Baker, in tears,

“ And proceed without further remark

To the day when you took me aboard of your ship  
To help you in hunting the Snark.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

"A dear uncle of mine (after whom I was named)  
Remarked, when I bade him farewell —"

"Oh, skip your dear uncle," the Bellman exclaimed,  
As he angrily tingled his bell.

"He remarked to me then," said that mildest of men,  
"If your Snark be a Snark that is right:  
Fetch it home by all means — you may serve it with greens  
And it's handy for striking a light.

"You may seek it with thimbles — and seek it with care;  
You may hunt it with forks and hope;  
You may threaten its life with a railway-share;  
You may charm it with smiles and soap —"

("That's exactly the method," the Bellman bold  
In a hasty parenthesis cried,  
"That's exactly the way I have always been told  
That the capture of Snarks should be tried!")

"But oh, beamish nephew, beware of the day,  
If your Snark be a Boojum! For then  
You will softly and suddenly vanish away,  
And never be met with again!"

"It is this, it is this that oppresses my soul,  
When I think of my uncle's last words;  
And my heart is like nothing so much as a bowl  
Brimming over with quivering curds!

"It is this, it is this —" "We have had that before!"  
The Bellman indignantly said.  
And the Baker replied "Let me say it once more.  
It is this, it is this, that I dread!

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

“ I engage with the Snark — every night after dark —  
In a dreamy delirious fight:

I serve it with greens in those shadowy scenes,  
And I use it for striking a light:

“ But if ever I meet with a Boojum, that day,  
In a moment (of this I am sure),

I shall softly and suddenly vanish away —  
And the notion I cannot endure! ”

*Lewis Carroll*

## HOW TO TELL THE WILD ANIMALS

If ever you should go by chance  
To jungles in the East;  
And if there should to you advance  
A large and tawny beast,  
If he roars at you as you're dyin'  
You'll know it is the Asian Lion.

Or if some time when roaming round,  
A noble wild beast greets you,  
With black stripes on a yellow ground.  
Just notice if he eats you.  
This simple rule may help you learn  
The Bengal Tiger to discern.

If strolling forth, a beast you view,  
Whose hide with spots is peppered,  
As soon as has lept on you,  
You'll know it is the leopard.  
'Twill do no good to roar with pain,  
He'll only lep and lep again.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

If when you're walking round your yard,  
You meet a creature there,  
Who hugs you very, very hard,  
Be sure it is the Bear.  
If you have any doubt, I guess  
He'll give you just one more caress.

Though to distinguish beasts of prey  
A novice might nonplus,  
The Crocodiles you always may  
Tell from Hyenas thus:  
Hyenas come with merry smiles;  
But if they weep, they're Crocodiles.

The true Chameleon is small,  
A lizard sort of thing;  
He hasn't any ears at all,  
And not a single wing.  
If there is nothing on the tree,  
'Tis the Chameleon you see.

*Carolyn Wells*

## THE YAK

As a friend to the children commend me the Yak.  
You will find it exactly the thing:  
It will carry and fetch, you can ride on its back,  
Or lead it about with a string.

The Tartar who dwells on the plains of Thibet  
(A desolate region of snow)  
Has for centuries made it a nursery pet,  
And surely the Tartar should know!

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

Then tell your papa where the Yak can be got,  
And if he is awfully rich  
He will buy you the creature — or else he will not.  
(I cannot be positive which.)

*Hilaire Belloc*

### THE FROG

Be kind and tender to the Frog,  
And do not call him names,  
As 'Slimy skin,' or 'Polly-wog,'  
Or likewise 'Ugly James,'  
Or 'Gape-a-grin,' or 'Toad-gone-wrong,'  
Or 'Billy Bandy-knees':  
The Frog is justly sensitive  
To epithets like these.

No animal will more repay  
A treatment kind and fair;  
At least so lonely people say  
Who keep a Frog (and, by the way,  
They are extremely rare).

*Hilaire Belloc*

### THE LION

The Lion, the Lion, he dwells in the waste,  
He has a big head and a very small waist;  
But his shoulders are stark, and his jaws they are grim,  
And a good little child will not play with him.

*Hilaire Belloc*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## THE GLAD YOUNG CHAMOIS

How lightly leaps the youthful chamois <sup>1</sup>

From rock to rock and never misses!

I always get all cold and clamois

When near the edge of precipisses.

Confronted by some yawning chasm,

He bleats not for his sire or mamois

(That is, supposing that he has'm)

But yawns himself—the bold young lamois!

He is a thing of beauty always;

And when he dies, a gray old ramois,

Leaves us his horns to deck our hallways;

His skin cleans teaspoons, soiled or jamois.

I shouldn't like to be a chamois,

However much I am his debtor.

I hate to run and jump; why, damois,

'Most any job would suit me bebtor!

*Burges Johnson*

## WORDS

Now, speech is very curious:

You never know what minute

A word will show a brand-new side,

With brand-new meaning in it.

This world could hardly turn around,

If some things acted like they sound.

<sup>1</sup> Of course you know that, no matter how it is spelled, *chamo* is pronounced *shammy*.

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

Suppose the April flower-beds,  
Down in the garden spaces,  
Were made with green frog-blanket spreads  
And caterpillar-cases;  
Or oak trees locked their trunks to hide  
The countless rings they keep inside!

Suppose from every pitcher-plant  
The milk-weed came a-pouring;  
That tiger-lilies could be heard  
With dandelions roaring,  
Till all the cat-tails, far and near,  
Began to bristle up in fear!

What if the old cow blew her horn  
Some peaceful evening hour,  
And suddenly a blast replied  
From every trumpet-flower,  
While people's ears beat noisy drums  
To "Hail, the Conquering Hero Comes!"

If barn-yard fowls had honey-combs,  
What should we think, I wonder?  
If lightning-bugs should swiftly strike,  
Then peal with awful thunder?  
And would it turn our pink cheeks pale  
To see a comet switch its tail?

*Nancy Byrd Turner*

## CONTRARY MARY

You ask why Mary was called contrary?  
Well, this is why, my dear:  
She planted the most outlandish things

## THIS SINGING WORLD

In her garden every year;  
She was always sowing the queerest seed,  
And when advised to stop,  
Her answer was merely, "No, indeed —  
Just wait till you see my crop!"

And here are some of the crops, my child  
(Although not nearly all):  
Bananarcissus and cucumberries,  
And violettuce small;  
Potatomatoes, melonions rare,  
And rhubarberries round,  
With porcupineapples prickly-rough  
On a little bush close to the ground.

She gathered the stuff in mid-July  
And sent it away to sell —  
And now you'll see how she earned her name,  
And how she earned it well.  
Were the crops hauled off in a farmer's cart?  
No, not by any means,  
But in little June-buggies and automobileetles  
And dragonflying-machines!

*Nancy Byrd Turner*

## A MEDLEY

Little Jack Horner sat in the corner  
Eying the pies all day,  
While little Miss Muffet sat on her tuffet  
Eating her curds and whey.

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

Old Mother Hubbard then went to the cupboard  
To give him a pie and bun,  
When out walked a spider and sat down beside her —  
So *this* little pig had none!

*Michael Lewis*

## COMPANIONS

I know not of what we ponder'd  
Or made pretty pretence to talk,  
As, her hand within mine, we wander'd  
Toward the pool by the limetree walk,  
While the dew fell in showers from the passion-flowers  
And the blush-rose bent on her stalk.

I can not recall her figure:  
Was it regal as Juno's own?  
Or only a trifle bigger  
Then the elves who surround the throne  
Of the Faëry Queen, and are seen, I ween,  
By mortals in dreams alone?

What her eyes were like, I know not:  
Perhaps they were blurr'd with tears;  
And perhaps in your skies there glow not  
(On the contrary) clearer spheres.  
No! as to her eyes I am just as wise  
As you or the cat, my dears.

Her teeth, I presume, were "pearly":  
But which was she, brunette or blonde?  
Her hair, was it quaintly curly,  
Or as straight as a beadle's wand?  
That I fail'd to remark; — it was rather dark  
And shadowy round the pond.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Then the hand that reposed so snugly

In mine — was it plump or spare?

Was the countenance fair or ugly?

Nay, children, you have me there!

My eyes were p'raps blurred; and besides I'd heard

That it's horribly rude to stare.

And I — was I brusque and surly?

Or oppressively bland and fond?

Was I partial to rising early?

Or why did we twain abscond,

All breakfastless too, from the public view

To prow! by a misty pond?

What pass'd, what was felt or spoken —

Whether anything pass'd at all —

And whether the heart was broken,

That beat under that shelt'ring shawl —

(If shawl she had on, which I doubt) — has gone,

Yes, gone from me past recall.

Was I haply the lady's suitor?

Or her uncle? I can't make out —

Ask your governess, dears, or tutor.

For myself, I'm in hopeless doubt

As to why we were there, who on earth we were,

And what this is all about.

*C. S. Calverley*

# RHYME WITHOUT REASON

## NONSENSE RHYMES

### I

*On DIGITAL EXTREMITIES:*

*A Poem, and a Gem It Is!*

I'd Rather have Fingers than Toes;  
I'd Rather have Ears than a Nose;  
    And As for my Hair,  
    I'm Glad it's All There;  
I'll be Awfully Sad, when it Goes!

### II

*THE FLOORLESS ROOM: A Novel Sort  
Of Argument Without Support.*

I Wish that my Room had a Floor!  
I don't so Much Care for a Door,  
    But this Crawling Around  
    Without Touching the Ground  
Is getting to be Quite a Bore!

### III

*THE SUNSET: Picturing the Glow  
It Casts upon a Dish of Dough.*

The Sun is Low, to Say the Least,  
    Although it is Well-Red;  
Yet, Since it Rises in the Yeast,  
    It Should be Better Bred!



## THIS SINGING WORLD

### IV

*THE WINDOW PAIN: a Theme Symbolic,  
Pertaining to the Melon Colic.*

The Window has Four Little Panes;  
    But One have I —  
The Window Pains are in its Sash;  
    I Wonder Why!

### V

*THE PURPLE COW'S Projected Feast:  
Reflections on a Mythic Beast,  
Who's quite Remarkable, at Least.*

I never saw a Purple Cow,  
    I never hope to see one;  
But I can tell you, anyhow,  
    I'd rather see than be one!

*Gelett Burgess*

## NONSENSE LIMERICKS

There was an Old Man in a tree  
Who was horribly bored by a Bee;  
    When they said, "Does it buzz?"  
    He replied, "Yes, it does!  
It's a regular brute of a Bee."

\*

There was a Young Lady of Norway,  
Who casually sat in a Doorway;  
    When the door squeezed her flat,  
    She exclaimed, "What of that?"  
This courageous Young Lady of Norway.

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

There was an Old Man who said, "How  
Shall I flee from this horrible Cow?  
I will sit on this stile,  
And continue to smile,  
Which may soften the heart of that Cow."

\*

There was an Old Man of Cape Horn,  
Who wished he had never been born;  
So he sat on a Chair  
Till he died of despair,  
That dolorous Man of Cape Horn.

\*

There was a Young Lady whose eyes  
Were unique as to color and size;  
When she opened them wide,  
People all turned aside,  
And started away in surprise.

\*

There was an Old Man with a beard,  
Who said, "It is just as I feared! —  
Two Owls and a Hen,  
Four Larks and a Wren,  
Have all built their nests in my beard! "

*Edward Lear*

## THREE FAMOUS LIMERICKS

### I

There was a young lady of Niger  
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger;  
They returned from the ride  
With the lady inside,  
And the smile on the face of the tiger.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### II

The poor benighted Hindoo,  
He does the best he kinddo;  
He sticks to caste  
From first to last;  
For pants he makes his skindo.

### III

A lady there was of Antigua,  
Who said to her spouse, "What a pig you are!"  
He answered, "My queen,  
Is it manners you mean,  
Or do you refer to my figuah?"

*Cosmo Monkhouse*

## FOUR TRICKY LIMERICKS

### I

A tutor who tooted the flute  
Tried to tutor two tooters to toot.  
Said the two to the tutor,  
"Is it harder to toot or  
To tutor two tooters to toot?"

### II

A canner, exceedingly canny,  
One morning remarked to his granny,  
"A canner can can  
Anything that he can,  
But a canner can't can a can, can he?"

## RHYME WITHOUT REASON

### III

There was a young fellow named Tait,  
Who dined with his girl at 8.08;  
But I'd hate to relate  
What that fellow named Tait  
And his tête-a-tête ate at 8.08.

### IV

Said a bad little youngster named Beauchamp: \*  
"Those jelly-tarts, how shall I reauchamp?  
To my parents I'd go,  
But they always say 'No,'  
No matter how much I beseauchamp."

*Carolyn Wells*

\* (Pronounced "Beecham" !)





*CROONS AND LULLABIES*



## *CROONS AND LULLABIES*

### WYNKEN, BLYNKEN, and NOD

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night

Sailed off in a wooden shoe —

Sailed on a river of crystal light,

Into a sea of dew.

‘Where are you going, and what do you wish?’

The old moon asked the three.

‘We have come to fish for the herring-fish

That live in this beautiful sea;

Nets of silver and gold have we!’

Said Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,

As they rocked in the wooden shoe,

And the wind that sped them all night long,

Ruffled the waves of dew.

The little stars were the herring-fish

That lived in that beautiful sea —

‘Now cast your nets wherever you wish —

But never afear’d are we’;

So cried the stars to the fishermen three:

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

All night long their nets they threw

For the fish in the twinkling foam —

Then down from the sky came the wooden shoe,

Bringing the fishermen home;

’Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed

As if it could not be;

And some folks thought ’twas a dream they’d dreamed

Of sailing that beautiful sea —

But I shall name you the fishermen three:

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,  
And Nod is a little head,  
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies  
Is a wee one's trundle-bed.  
So shut your eyes while mother sings  
Of wonderful sights that be,  
And you shall see the beautiful things  
As you rock in the misty sea,  
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three:  
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

*Eugene Field*

## LULLABY

Bedtime's come fu' little boys.  
Po' little lamb.  
Too tiahed out to make a noise,  
Po' little lamb.  
You gwine t' b'have to-morrer sho' ?  
Yes, you tole me dat befo',  
Don't you fool me, chile, no mo',  
Po' little lamb.

You been bad de livelong day,  
Po' little lamb.  
Th'owin' stones an' runnin' 'way,  
Po' little lamb.  
My, but you's a-runnin' wil',  
Look jes' lak some po' folks chile;  
Mam' gwine whup you atter while,  
Po' little lamb.

## CROONS AND LULLABIES

Come hyeah! you mos' tiahed to def,  
Po' little lamb.

Played yo'se'f clean out o' bref,  
Po' little lamb.

See dem han's now — sich a sight!  
Would you evah b'lieve dey's white?  
Stan' still twell I wash 'em right,  
Po' little lamb.

Jes' cain't hol' yo' haid up straight,  
Po' little lamb.

Hadn't oughter played so late,  
Po' little lamb.

Mammy don' know whut she'd do,  
Ef de chillun's all lak you;  
You's a caution now fu' true,  
Po' little lamb.

Lay yo' haid down in my lap,  
Po' little lamb.

Y'ought to have a right good slap,  
Po' little lamb.

You been runnin' roun' a heap.  
Shet dem eyes an' don't you peep.  
Dah now, dah now, go to sleep,  
Po' little lamb.

*Paul Lawrence Dunbar*

## SWEET AND LOW

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me;  
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon;  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.  
*Alfred Tennyson*

### A CRADLE SONG

The angels are stooping  
Above your bed;  
They weary of trooping  
With the whimpering dead.

God's laughing in heaven  
To see you so good;  
The Shining Seven  
Are gay with His mood.

I kiss you and kiss you,  
My pigeon, my own;  
Ah, how I shall miss you  
When you have grown.

*William Butler Yeats*

## CROONS AND LULLABIES

### SLEEP

While sways the restless sea  
Beyond the shore,  
And the waves sing listlessly  
Their secret lore,  
And the soft fragrant air  
From off the deep  
Scarce stirs thine outspread hair, —  
Sleep!

Far up in purple skies  
Great lamps hang out,  
White flames that fall and rise  
In motley rout;  
While fall their silver rays  
O'er crag and steep,  
Woodlands and meadow-ways, —  
Sleep!

While the moon's amber gleams  
Gild rock and flower,  
Let no untimely dreams  
Possess the hour:  
Let no vague fears the heart  
'Mid slumber keep,  
In dreams love hath no smart, —  
Sleep!

*William Sharp*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## TWO TAVERNS

I remember how I lay  
On a bank a summer day,  
Peering into weed and flower:  
Watched a poppy all one hour;  
Watched it till the air grew chill  
In the darkness of the hill;  
Till I saw a wild bee dart  
Out of the cold to the poppy's heart;  
Saw the petals gently spin,  
And shut the little lodger in.

Then I took the quiet road  
To my own secure abode.  
All night long his tavern hung;  
Now it rested, now it swung;  
I asleep in steadfast tower,  
He asleep in stirring flower;  
In our hearts the same delight  
In the hushes of the night;  
Over us both the same dear care  
As we slumbered unaware.

*Edwin Markham*

## OLD NURSE WINTER

In Autumn tomboy winds begin to throw  
The dust and scattered leaves into Earth's eyes,  
And Old Nurse Winter hurries from the skies  
In answer to her darling's cry of woe.  
Kind Father Night bends low to still her weeping  
And calls the friendly stars to guard her sleeping.

## CROONS AND LULLABIES

Old Nurse Winter, bless her wrinkled heart,  
Comes shaking out her coverlets of snow,  
She'll tuck the baby Earth in warm, I know,  
And tell her little pattering tales to start  
A dream of silver moss and snow-drops peeping;  
And sing her windy songs to soothe her sleeping.

*Jean Starr Untermeyer*

### THE SHIP O' BED

When I was young, I had a bed  
That was no bed at all,  
But a good great ship with seven masts  
And seamen brown and tall.

Each seaman had a lantern white  
To light us past the bars,  
And all of them knew old sea-songs,  
And their eyes were like the stars.

The stars rolled millions overhead,  
But seven were made fast,  
The brightest and the best of all,  
Upon each mighty mast.

Four Captains had my starry bed,  
I named them in my prayer,  
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,  
With golden beards and hair.

But the Pilot, whom I loved the best  
Because he called me *Sir*  
And played the games I liked to play,  
Was good Saint Christopher.

## *THIS SINGING WORLD*

Out we broke our sails which seemed  
Like patches that the moon  
Makes upon a quiet floor  
When crickets sing their tune.

And we were off to seek a Dame  
Who would be kind to me  
And turn each sailor's heart to gold,  
The Lady of the Sea!

I think she lived beyond the place  
Where fish grow crowns of gold  
And where there are so many tales  
That all are never told.

The wind blew very wonderful,  
Throwing foam like snow,  
Yet always let us hear the call  
Of sea-chicks peeping low.

Out the yellow beards all flew  
Of Matthew, Luke and John,  
But Mark's flew longest of them all  
And was coloured like the dawn.

The fish took wing and played about  
Each opal sail and sang  
Of goose-girls and the currant-fruits  
That on the bun-trees hang.

When flowers came above the waves  
We knew the port was nigh;  
We could see a silver town  
Rising up hard by.

## CROONS AND LULLABIES

Down came our sails, each sailor bowed  
And plucked his cap to me. . . .  
'Twas day, and there my Mother stood,  
The Lady of the Sea!

*Robert P. Tristram Coffin*

## YOUNG AND OLD

When all the world is young, lad,  
And all the trees are green;  
And every goose a swan, lad,  
And every lass a queen;  
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,  
And round the world away;  
Young blood must have its course, lad,  
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,  
And all the trees are brown;  
And all the sport is stale, lad,  
And all the wheels run down;  
Creep home, and take your place there,  
The spent and maimed among:  
God grant you find one face there,  
You loved when all was young.

*Charles Kingsley*

## CROSSING THE BAR

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness or farewell,  
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crost the bar.

*Alfred Tennyson*

## O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

*(In Memory of Abraham Lincoln)*

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,  
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought  
is won,  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and  
daring;  
But O heart! heart! heart!  
O the bleeding drops of red,  
Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle  
trills,

## CROONS AND LULLABIES

For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths — for you the  
shores acrowding,

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces  
turning;

Here Captain! dear father!

This arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck,

You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,  
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed  
and done,

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object  
won;

Exult O shores, and ring O bells!

But I with mournful tread,

Walk the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

*Walt Whitman*

## REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky

Dig the grave and let me lie:

Glad did I live and gladly die,

And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you 'grave for me:

*Here he lies where he long'd to be;*

*Home is the sailor, home from the sea,*

*And the hunter home from the hill.*

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

# THIS SINGING WORLD

## UP-HILL

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

*Yes, to the very end.*

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

*From morn to night, my friend.*

But is there for the night a resting-place?

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin?

May not the darkness hide it from my face?

*You cannot miss that inn.*

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?

*Those who have gone before.*

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

*They will not keep you standing at that door.*

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?

*Of labor you shall find the sum.*

Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

*Yea, beds for all who come.*

*Christina Georgiana Rossetti*

## NOD

Softly along the road of evening,

In a twilight dim with rose,

Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew

Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

His drowsy flock streams on before him,

Their fleeces charged with gold,

To where the sun's last beam leans low

On Nod the shepherd's fold.

## CROONS AND LULLABIES

The hedge is quick and green with briar,  
From their sand the conies creep;  
And all the birds that fly in heaven  
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses,  
Yet, when night's shadows fall,  
His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon,  
Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,  
The waters of no-more-pain,  
His ram's bell ring 'neath an arch of stars,  
' Rest, rest, and rest again.'

*Walter De la Mare*



*STARS TO HITCH TO*



## STARS TO HITCH TO

### IN AFTER DAYS

In after days when grasses high  
O'ertop the stone where I shall lie,  
Though ill or well the world adjust  
My slender claim to honored dust,  
I shall not question or reply.

I shall not see the morning sky;  
I shall not hear the night-wind's sigh;  
I shall be mute, as all men must  
In after days!

But yet, now living, fain were I  
That some one then should testify,  
Saying — "He held his pen in trust  
To Art, not serving shame or lust."  
Will none? — Then let my memory die  
In after days!

*Austin Dobson*

### THE SONG OF HONOUR

I climbed a hill as light fell short,  
And rooks came home in scramble sort,  
And filled the trees and flapped and fought  
And sang themselves to sleep;  
An owl from nowhere with no sound  
Swung by and soon was nowhere found,  
I heard him calling half-way round,  
Holloing loud and deep;  
A pair of stars, faint pins of light,



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Then many a star, sailed into sight,  
And all the stars, the flower of night,  
Were round me at a leap;  
To tell how still the valleys lay  
I heard a watchdog miles away,—  
And bells of distant sheep.

I heard no more of bird or bell,  
The mastiff in a slumber fell,  
I stared into the sky,  
As wondering men have always done  
Since beauty and the stars were one  
Though none so hard as I.  
It seemed, so still the valleys were,  
As if the whole world knelt at prayer,  
Save me and me alone;  
So pure and wide that silence was  
I feared to bend a blade of grass,  
And there I stood like stone.

There, sharp and sudden, there I heard—

*Ah! some wild lovesick singing bird  
Woke singing in the trees?  
The nightingale and babble-wren  
Were in the English greenwood then,  
And you heard one of these?*

The babble-wren and nightingale  
Sang in the Abyssinian vale  
That season of the year!  
Yet, true enough, I heard them plain  
I heard them both again, again,  
As sharp and sweet and clear  
As if the Abyssinian tree  
Had thrust a bough across the sea,

## STARS TO HITCH TO

Had thrust a bough across to me  
With music for my ear!

I heard them both, and oh! I heard  
The song of every singing bird  
That sings beneath the sky,  
And with the song of lark and wren  
The song of mountains, moths and men  
And seas and rainbows vie!  
I heard the universal choir,  
The Sons of Light, exalt their Sire  
With universal song,  
Earth's lowliest and loudest notes,  
Her million times ten million throats  
Exalt Him loud and long,  
And lips and lungs and tongues of Grace  
From every part and every place  
Within the shining of His face,  
The universal throng.

I heard the hymn of Being sound  
From every well of honour found  
In human sense and soul:  
The song of poets when they write  
The testament of Beauty sprite  
Upon a flying scroll,  
The song of painters, when they take  
A burning brush for Beauty's sake  
And limn her features whole —

The song of men divinely wise  
Who look and see in starry skies  
Not stars so much as robins' eyes,  
And when these pale away,

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Hear flocks of shiny Pleiades  
Among the plums and apple trees  
Sing in the summer day —

The song of all both high and low  
To some blest vision true,  
The song of beggars when they throw  
The crust of pity all men owe  
To hungry sparrows in the snow,  
Old beggars hungry too —  
The song of kings of kingdoms when  
They rise, above their fortune, Men,  
And crown themselves anew —

The song of courage, heart and will  
And gladness in a fight,  
Of men who face a hopeless hill  
With sparkling and delight,  
The bells and bells of song that ring  
Round banners of a cause or king  
From armies bleeding white —

The song of sailors every one  
When monstrous tide and tempest run  
At ships like bulls at red,  
When stately ships are twirled and spun  
Like whipping tops, and help there's none,  
And mighty ships ten thousand ton  
Go down like lumps of lead —  
And song of fighters stern as they  
At odds with fortune night and day,  
Crammed up in cities grim and grey  
As thick as bees in hives,  
Hosannas of a lowly throng

## STARS TO HITCH TO

Who sing unconscious of their song,  
Whose lips are in their lives —

And crying loves and passions still  
In every key from soft to shrill  
And numbers never done,  
Dog-loyalties to faith and friend,  
And loves like Ruth's of old no end,  
And intermission none —

And song — that song whose singers come  
With old kind tales of pity from  
The Great Compassion's lips,  
That make the bells of Heaven to peal  
Round pillows frosty with the feel  
Of Death's cold finger tips —  
The song of men all sorts and kinds,  
As many tempers, moods and minds  
As leaves are on a tree,  
As many faiths and castes and creeds,  
As many human bloods and breeds  
As in the world may be;  
The song of each and all who gaze  
On Beauty in her naked blaze,  
Or see her dimly in a haze,  
Or get her light in fitful rays  
And tiniest needles even,  
The song of all not wholly dark,  
Not wholly sunk in stupor stark  
Too deep for groping Heaven —

And alleluias sweet and clear  
And wild with beauty men mishear,  
From choirs of song as near and dear

## THIS SINGING WORLD

To Paradise as they,  
The everlasting pipe and flute •  
Of wind and sea and bird and brute,  
And lips deaf men imagine mute  
In wood and stone and clay,  
The music of a lion strong  
That shakes a hill a whole night long,  
A hill as loud as he,  
The twitter of a mouse among  
Melodious greenery,  
The ruby's and the rainbow's song,  
The nightingale's — all three,  
The song of life that wells and flows  
From every leopard, lark and rose  
And everything that gleams or goes  
Lack-lustre in the sea.

I heard it all, each, every note  
Of every lung and tongue and throat,  
Ay, every rhythm and rhyme  
Of everything that lives and loves  
And upward, ever upward moves  
From lowly to sublime!  
Earth's multitudinous Sons of Light,  
I heard them lift their lyric might  
With each and every charming sprite  
That lit the sky that wondrous night  
As far as eye could climb!

I heard it all, I heard the whole  
Harmonious hymn of Being roll  
Up through the chapel of my soul  
And at the altar die,  
And in the awful quiet then

## STARS TO HITCH TO

Myself I heard, Amen, Amen,  
Amen I heard me cry!  
I heard it all and then although  
I caught my flying senses, Oh,  
A dizzy man was I!  
I stood and stared; the sky was lit,  
The sky was stars all over it,  
I stood, I knew not why,  
Without a wish, without a will,  
I stood upon that silent hill  
And stared into the sky until  
My eyes were blind with stars and still  
I stared into the sky.

*Ralph Hodgson*

## FOURTH OF JULY ODE

### I

Our fathers fought for Liberty,  
They struggled long and well,  
History of their deeds can tell —  
But did they leave us free?

### II

Are we free from vanity,  
Free from pride, and free from self,  
Free from love of power and pelf,  
From everything that's beggarly?

### III

Are we free from stubborn will,  
From low hate and malice small,  
From opinion's tyrant thrall?  
Are none of us our own slaves still?

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### IV

Are we free to speak our thought,  
To be happy, and be poor,  
Free to enter Heaven's door,  
To live and labor as we ought?

### V

Are we then made free at last  
From the fear of what men say,  
Free to reverence To-day,  
Free from the slavery of the Past?

### VI

Our fathers fought for liberty,  
They struggled long and well,  
History of their deeds can tell —  
But *ourselves* must set us free.

*James Russell Lowe*

## SERVICE

(From *Pippa Passes*)

All service ranks the same with God:  
If now, as formerly he trod  
Paradise, his presence fills  
Our earth, each only as God wills  
Can work — God's puppets, best and worst,  
Are we; there is no last nor first.

Say not "a small event!" Why "small"?  
Costs it more pain than this, ye call  
A "great event," should come to pass,  
Than that? Untwine me from the mass

## STARS TO HITCH TO

Of deeds which make up life, one deed  
Power shall fall short in or exceed!

*Robert Browning*

## THE EXAMPLE

Here's an example from  
A Butterfly;  
That on a rough, hard rock  
Happy can lie;  
Friendless and all alone  
On this unsweetened stone.

Now let my bed be hard,  
No care take I;  
I'll make my joy like this  
Small Butterfly;  
Whose happy heart has power  
To make a stone a flower.

*W. H. Davies*

## HAPPY WIND

Oh, happy wind, how sweet  
Thy life must be!  
The great, proud fields of gold  
Run after thee:  
And here are flowers, with heads  
To nod and shake;  
And dreaming butterflies  
To tease and wake.  
Oh, happy wind, I say,  
To be alive this day.

*W. H. Davies*



## THIS SINGING WORLD

### THE EAGLE AND THE MOLE

Avoid the reeking herd,  
Shun the polluted flock,  
Live like that stoic bird,  
The eagle of the rock.

The huddled warmth of crowds  
Begets and fosters hate;  
He keeps, above the clouds,  
His cliff inviolate.

When flocks are folded warm,  
And herds to shelter run,  
He sails above the storm,  
He stares into the sun.

If in the eagle's track  
Your sinews cannot leap,  
Avoid the lathered pack,  
Turn from the steaming sheep.

If you would keep your soul  
From spotted sight or sound,  
Live like the velvet mole;  
Go burrow underground.

And there hold intercourse  
With roots of trees and stones,  
With rivers at their source,  
And disembodied bones.

*Elinor Wylie*

## STARS TO HITCH TO

### IF —

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too:  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream — and not make dreams your master;  
If you can think — and not make thoughts your aim,  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two impostors just the same:  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss:  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with Kings — nor lose the common touch,  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
If all men count with you, but none too much:

## THIS SINGING WORLD

If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And — which is more — you'll be a Man, my son!  
*Rudyard Kipling*

### PRIMER LESSON

Look out how you use proud words.  
When you let proud words go, it is not  
easy to call them back.  
They wear long boots, hard boots;  
they walk off proud; they can't  
hear you calling —  
Look out how you use proud words.

*Carl Sandburg*

### HATE

My enemy came nigh,  
And I  
Stared fiercely in his face.  
My lips went writhing back in a grimace,  
And stern I watched him with a narrow eye.  
Then, as I turned away, my enemy,  
That bitter heart and savage, said to me:  
“Some day, when this is past,  
When all the arrows that we have are cast,  
We may ask one another why we hate,  
And fail to find a story to relate.  
It may seem to us then a mystery  
That we could hate each other.”

Thus said he,  
And did not turn away,

## STARS TO HITCH TO

Waiting to hear what I might have to say,  
But I fled quickly, fearing if I stayed  
I might have kissed him as I would a maid.

*James Stephens*

## TREE AND SKY<sup>1</sup>

Let my soul, a shining tree,  
Silver branches lift towards thee,  
Where on a hallowed winter's night  
The clear-eyed angels may alight.

And if there should be tempests in  
My spirit, let them surge like din  
Of noble melodies at war;  
With fervour of such blades of triumph as are  
Flashed in white orisons of saints who go  
On shafts of glory to the ecstasies they know.

*Siegfried Sassoon*

## THE ENDURING

If the autumn ended  
Ere the birds flew southward,  
If in the cold with weary throats  
They vainly strove to sing,  
Winter would be eternal;  
Leaf and bush and blossom  
Would never once more riot  
In the spring.

<sup>1</sup> By permission from *The Old Huntsman* by Siegfried Sassoon  
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## THIS SINGING WORLD

If remembrance ended  
When life and love are gathered,  
If the world were not living  
Long after one is gone,  
Song would not ring, nor sorrow  
Stand at the door in evening;  
Life would vanish and slacken,  
Men would be changed to stone.

But there will be autumn's bounty  
Dropping upon our weariness,  
There will be hopes unspoken  
And joys to haunt us still;  
There will be dawn and sunset  
Though we have cast the world away,  
And the leaves dancing  
Over the hill.

*John Gould Fletcher*

## WISHES FOR MY SON

Now, my son, is life for you,  
And I wish you joy of it, —  
Joy of power in all you do,  
Deeper passion, better wit  
Than I had who had enough,  
Quicker life and length thereof,  
More of every gift but love.

Love I have beyond all men,  
Love that now you share with me —  
What have I to wish you then  
But that you be good and free,  
And that God to you may give  
Grace in stronger days to live?

## STARS TO HITCH TO

For I wish you more than I  
Ever knew of glorious deed,  
Though no rapture passed me by  
That an eager heart could heed,  
Though I followed heights and sought  
Things the sequel never brought.

Wild and perilous holy things  
Flaming with a martyr's blood,  
And the joy that laughs and sings  
Where a foe must be withstood,  
Joy of headlong happy chance  
Leading on the battle dance.

But I found no enemy,  
No man in a world of wrong,  
That Christ's word of charity  
Did not render clean and strong —  
Who was I to judge my kind,  
Blindest groper of the blind?

God to you may give the sight  
And the clear, undoubting strength  
Wars to knit for single right,  
Freedom's war to knit at length,  
And to win through wrath and strife,  
To the sequel of my life.

But for you, so small and young,  
Born on Saint Cecilia's Day,  
I in more harmonious song  
Now for nearer joys should pray —  
Simpler joys: the natural growth  
Of your childhood and your youth,  
Courage, innocence, and truth:

## THIS SINGING WORLD

These for you, so small and young,  
In your hand and heart and tongue.

*Thomas MacDonagh*

## THUNDERSTORMS

My mind has thunderstorms,  
That brood for heavy hours:  
Until they rain me words,  
My thoughts are drooping flowers  
And sulking, silent birds.

Yet come, dark thunderstorms,  
And brood your heavy hours;  
For when you rain me words,  
My thoughts are dancing flowers  
And joyful singing birds.

*W. H. Davies*

## LEISURE

What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,  
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,  
Streams full of stars, like stars at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

## STARS TO HITCH TO

No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

*W. H. Davies*

## THE TUFT OF FLOWERS

I went to turn the grass once after one  
Who mowed it in the dew before the sun.

The dew was gone that made his blade so keen  
Before I came to view the levelled scene.

I looked for him behind an isle of trees;  
I listened for his whetstone on the breeze.

But he had gone his way, the grass all mown,  
And I must be, as he had been, — alone,

“As all must be,” I said within my heart,  
“Whether they work together or apart.”

But as I said it, swift there passed me by  
On noiseless wing a bewildered butterfly,

Seeking with memories grown dim over night  
Some resting flower of yesterday's delight.

And once I marked his flight go round and round,  
As where some flower lay withering on the ground.

And then he flew as far as eye could see,  
And then on tremulous wing came back to me.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

I thought of questions that have no reply,  
And would have turned to toss the grass to dry;

But he turned first, and led my eye to look  
At a tall tuft of flowers beside a brook,

A leaping tongue of bloom the scythe had spared  
Beside a reedy brook the scythe had bared.

I left my place to know them by their name,  
Finding them butterfly-weed when I came.

The mower in the dew had loved them thus,  
By leaving them to flourish, not for us,

Nor yet to draw one thought of ours to him,  
But from sheer morning gladness at the brim.

The butterfly and I had lit upon,  
Nevertheless, a message from the dawn,

That made me hear the wakening birds around,  
And hear his long scythe whispering to the ground,

And feel a spirit kindred to my own;  
So that henceforth I worked no more alone;

But glad with him, I worked as with his aid,  
And weary, sought at noon with him the shade;

And dreaming, as it were, held brotherly speech  
With one whose thought I had not hoped to reach.

"Men work together," I told him from the heart,  
"Whether they work together or apart."

*Robert Frost*

# STARS TO HITCH TO

## RECESSIONAL

God of our fathers, known of old —  
Lord of our far-flung battle line —  
Beneath whose awful hand we hold  
Dominion over palm and pine —  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies —  
The Captains and the Kings depart —  
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,  
An humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

Far-called our navies melt away —  
On dune and headland sinks the fire —  
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday  
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!  
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,  
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power we loose  
Wild tongues that have not thee in awe —  
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,  
Or lesser breeds without the Law —  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust  
In reeking tube and iron shard —  
All valiant dust that builds on dust,  
And guarding calls not Thee to guard.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

For frantic boast and foolish word,  
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

*Amen.*

*Rudyard Kipling*

## DUTY

When Duty comes a-knocking at your gate,  
Welcome him in; for if you bid him wait,  
He will depart only to come once more  
And bring seven other duties to your door.

*Edwin Markham*

## A PRAYER

Teach me, Father, how to go  
Softly as the grasses grow;  
Hush my soul to meet the shock  
Of the wild world as a rock;  
But my spirit, propt with power,  
Make as simple as a flower.  
Let the dry heart fill its cup,  
Like a poppy looking up;  
Let life lightly wear her crown,  
Like a poppy looking down.

Teach me, Father, how to be  
Kind and patient as a tree.  
Joyfully the crickets croon  
Under shady oak at noon;  
Beetle, on his mission bent,  
Tarries in that cooling tent.  
Let me, also, cheer a spot,

## STARS TO HITCH TO

Hidden field or garden grot —  
Place where passing souls can rest  
On the way and be their best.

*Edwin Markham*

## GIVE ME THE SPLENDID SILENT SUN

Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams full-  
dazzling,  
Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the  
orchard,  
Give me a field where the unmowed grass grows,  
Give me an arbor, give me the trellised grape,  
Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-moving  
animals teaching content,  
Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus west  
of the Mississippi, and I looking up at the stars,  
Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers  
where I can walk undisturbed,  
Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of whom I  
should never tire,  
Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by myself,  
for my own ears only,  
Give me solitude, give me Nature, give me again, O Nature,  
your primal sanities!

*Walt Whitman*



*CHRISTMAS CANDLES*



## CHRISTMAS CANDLES

### NOËL

On a winter's night long time ago

*(The bells ring loud and the bells ring low),*

When high howled wind, and down fell snow

*(Carillon, Carilla).*

Saint Joseph he and Notre Dame,

Riding on an ass, full weary came

From Nazareth into Bethlehem.

And the small child Jesus smile on you.

And Bethlehem inn they stood before

*(The bells ring less and the bells ring more),*

The landlord bade them begone from his door

*(Carillon, Carilla).*

"Poor folk" (says he), "must lie where they may,

For the Duke of Jewry comes this way,

With all his train on a Christmas Day."

And the small child Jesus smile on you.

Poor folk that may my carol hear

*(The bells ring single and the bells ring clear),*

See! God's one child had hardest cheer!

*(Carillon, Carilla).*

Men grown hard on a Christmas morn;

The dumb beast by and a babe forlorn.

It was very, very cold when our Lord was born.

And the small child Jesus smile on you.

Now these were Jews as Jews must be

*(The bells ring merry and the bells ring free),*

But Christian men in a band are we

*(Carillon, Carilla).*



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Empty we go, and ill-be-dight,  
Singing Noël on a Winter's night.  
Give us to sup by the warm firelight,  
And the small child Jesus smile on you.

*Hilaire Belloc*

### THE OXEN

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.

“Now they are all on their knees,”  
An elder said as we sat in a flock  
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where  
They dwelt in their strawy pen,  
Nor did it occur to one of us there  
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave  
In these years! Yet, I feel,  
If some one said on Christmas Eve,  
“Come; see the oxen kneel.

“In the lonely barton<sup>1</sup> by yonder coomb<sup>2</sup>  
Our childhood used to know,”  
I should go with him in the gloom,  
Hoping it might be so.

*Thomas Hardy*

<sup>1</sup> House or barn.    <sup>2</sup> Valley.





# CHRISTMAS CANDLES

## BALLAD OF THE EPIPHANY

When Christ was born in Bethlehem,  
Pan left his Sussex Downs,  
To see three kings go riding by,  
All in their robes and crowns;  
And, as they went in royal state,  
Pan followed them, unseen,  
Though tiny tufts of grass and flowers  
Showed where his feet had been.

And when to Bethlehem they came,  
Birds sang in every tree,  
And Mary in the stable sat,  
With Jesus on her knee;  
And while the oxen munched their hay,  
The kings with one accord  
Placed gold and frankincense and myrrh  
Before their infant Lord.

And when Pan peeped upon the scene,  
The Christ-Child clapped His hands,  
And chuckled with delight to see  
The god of pasture lands;  
And Mary sang "*Magnificat*"  
Above the kneeling kings,  
And angels circled overhead  
On rainbow-coloured wings.

And many a little singing bird  
Flew past the open door  
To hop and chirrup in the straw  
Above the stable floor;

## THIS SINGING WORLD

Wrens, robins, linnets, greenfinches,  
And many another one,  
Flew in to show good fellowship  
With Mary's newborn Son.

Then Pan stood up and played his pipes  
Beside the manger-bed,  
And every little bird went near  
And raised its faithful head;  
And one, most beautiful to see,  
A fair and milk-white dove,  
Arose and hovered in the air  
To testify its love.

But when the kings looked up to find  
Who made the piping sound,  
They only saw white lilies shine,  
Fresh-gathered, on the ground,  
And through the doorway, and beyond,  
A shaggy wild goat leap;  
And, in its gentle mother's arm,  
The Baby fast asleep.

*Charles Dalmon*

## KRISS KRINGLE

Just as the moon was fading amid her misty rings,  
And every stocking was stuffed with childhood's precious  
things,  
Old Kriss Kringle looked around, and saw on the elm-tree  
bough,  
High-hung, an oriole's nest, silent and empty now.  
"Quite like a stocking," he laughed, "pinned up there  
on the tree!

## CHRISTMAS CANDLES

Little I thought the birds expected a present from me! "  
Then old Kriss Kringle, who loves a joke as well as the  
best,  
Dropped a handful of flakes in the oriole's empty nest.

*Thomas Bailey Aldrich*

## CHRISTMAS MORNING

If Bethlehem were here today,  
Or this were very long ago,  
There wouldn't be a winter time  
Nor any cold or snow.

I'd run out through the garden gate,  
And down along the pasture walk;  
And off beside the cattle barns  
I'd hear a kind of gentle talk.

I'd move the heavy iron chain  
And pull away the wooden pin;  
I'd push the door a little bit  
And tiptoe very softly in.

The pigeons and the yellow hens  
And all the cows would stand away;  
Their eyes would open wide to see  
A lady in the manger hay,  
If this were very long ago  
And Bethlehem were here today.

And Mother held my hand and smiled —  
I mean the lady would — and she  
Would take the woolly blankets off  
Her little boy so I could see.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

His shut-up eyes would be asleep,  
And he would look just like our John,  
And he would be all crumpled too,  
And have a pinkish color on.

I'd watch his breath go in and out.  
His little clothes would all be white.  
I'd slip my finger in his hand  
To feel how he could hold it tight.

And she would smile and say, "Take care,"  
The mother, Mary, would, "Take care;"  
And I would kiss his little hand  
And touch his hair.

While Mary put the blankets back,  
The gentle talk would soon begin.  
And when I'd tiptoe softly out  
I'd meet the wise men going in.

*Elizabeth Madox Roberts*

## CHRISTMAS ISLAND<sup>1</sup>

Fringed with coral, floored with lava,  
Three-score leagues to south of Java,  
So is Christmas Island charted  
By geographers blind-hearted,  
— Just a dot, by their dull notion,  
On the burning Indian Ocean;  
Merely a refreshment station  
For the birds in long migration;  
Its pomegranates, custard-apples  
That the dancing sunshine dapples,

<sup>1</sup> By permission from *Fairy Gold* by Katharine Lee Bates.  
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## CHRISTMAS CANDLES

Cocoanuts with milky hollows  
Only feast wing-weary swallows  
Or the tropic fowl there dwelling. . . .  
Don't believe a word they're telling!  
Christmas Island, though it seem land,  
Is a floating bit of dreamland  
Gone adrift from childhood, planted  
By the winds with seeds enchanted,  
Seeds of candied plum and cherry:  
Here the Christmas Saints make merry.

Even saints must have vacation;  
So they chose from all creation  
As a change from iceberg castles  
Hung with snow in loops and tassels,  
Christmas Island for a summer  
Residence. The earliest comer  
Is our own saint, none diviner,  
Santa Claus. His ocean-liner  
Is a sleigh that's scudding fast.  
Mistletoe climbs up the mast,  
And the sail, so full of caper,  
Is of tissue wrapping paper.  
As he steers, he hums a carol;  
But instead of fur apparel  
Smudged with soot, he's spick and spandy  
In white linen, dear old dandy.  
With a Borealis sash on,  
And a palm-leaf hat in fashion  
Wreathed about with holly berry.  
Welcome, Santa! Rest you merry!

Next, his chubby legs bestriding  
*Such* a Yule-log, who comes riding



## THIS SINGING WORLD

Overseas, the feast to dish up,  
But — aha! — the boys' own bishop,  
Good St. Nicholas! And listen!  
Out of Denmark, old Jule-nissen,  
Kindly goblin, bent, rheumatic,  
In the milk-bowl set up attic  
For his Christmas cheer, comes bobbing  
Through the waves. He'll be hob-nobbing  
With Knecht Clobes, Dutchman true,  
Sailing in a wooden shoe.  
When the sunset gold enamels  
All the sea, three cloudy camels  
Bear the King with stately paces,  
Taking islands for oases,  
While a star-boat brings Kriss Kringel.  
Singing *Noël* as they mingle,  
Drinking toasts in sunshine sherry!  
How the Christmas Saints make merry!

While a gray contralto pigeon  
Coos that loving is religion,  
How they laugh and how they rollick,  
How they fill the isle with frolic.  
Up the Christmas Trees they clamber,  
Lighting candles rose and amber,  
Till the sudden moonbeams glisten.  
Then all kneel but old Jule-nissen,  
(Who, a heathen elf stiff-jointed,  
Doffs his night-cap, red and pointed)  
For within the moon's pale luster  
They behold bright figures cluster;  
Their adoring eyes look on a  
Silver-throned serene Madonna,

## CHRISTMAS CANDLES

With the Christ-Child, rosy sweeting,  
Smiling to their loyal greeting.  
Would that on this Holy Night  
We might share such blissful sight,  
— We might find a fairy ferry  
To that isle where saints make merry!  
*Katherine Lee Bates*

## A CHRISTMAS FOLK-SONG

The little Jesus came to town;  
The wind blew up, the wind blew down;  
Out in the street the wind was bold;  
Now who would house H'im from the cold?

Then opened wide a stable door,  
Fair were the rushes on the floor;  
The Ox put forth a hornèd head:  
"Come, little Lord, here make Thy bed."

Uprose the Sheep were folded near:  
"Thou Lamb of God, come, enter here."  
He entered there to rush and reed,  
Who was the Lamb of God indeed.

The little Jesus came to town;  
With ox and sheep He laid Him down;  
Peace to the byre, peace to the fold,  
For that they housed Him from the cold!  
*Lizette Woodworth Reese*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### CHOIR-BOYS ON CHRISTMAS EVE

“Then sleep, Thou little Child.” Thus, sweet and high,  
The choir-boys sang, on Christmas Eve when men,  
With dim-lit manger and with lullaby,  
Pretend that Jesus is a child again.  
Like candles, flickering soft, their voices went,  
Or any light which is not of the sun;  
Like sound whose large vibrations have been spent,  
Or pale-gold texture all too thinly spun.  
A woman’s voice without her joy and fear  
The tiny boys wove sheerly to and fro —  
No woman could have sung so light and clear  
The crooning words which only women know.  
Mary must wonder and, remembering, weep  
To hear these babies sing Her Child to sleep.

*Louise Townsend Nicholl*

### CHRISTMAS

A Boy was born at Bethlehem  
that knew the haunts of Galilee.  
He wandered on Mount Lebanon,  
and learned to love each forest tree.

But I was born at Marlborough,  
and love the homely faces there;  
and for all other men besides  
'tis little love I have to spare.

I should not mind to die for them,  
my own dear downs, my comrade true.  
But that great heart of Bethlehem,  
he died for men he never knew.

## CHRISTMAS CANDLES

And yet, I think, at Golgotha,  
as Jesus' eyes were closed in death,  
they saw with love most passionate  
the village street of Nazareth.

*E. Hilton Young*

## THE HOUSE OF CHRISTMAS

There fared a mother driven forth  
Out of an inn to roam;  
In the place where she was homeless  
All men are at home.  
The crazy stable close at hand,  
With shaking timber and shifting sand,  
Grew a stronger thing to abide and stand  
Than the square stones of Rome.

For men are homesick in their homes,  
And strangers under the sun,  
And they lay their heads in a foreign land  
Whenever the day is done.  
Here we have battle and blazing eyes,  
And chance and honour and high surprise;  
But our homes are under miraculous skies  
Where the Yule tale was begun.

A child in a foul stable,  
Where the beasts feed and foam;  
Only where He was homeless  
Are you and I at home;  
We have hands that fashion and heads that know,  
But our hearts we lost — how long ago! —  
In a place no chart nor ship can show  
Under the sky's dome.

## THIS SINGING WORLD

This world is wild as an old wives' tale,  
And strange the plain things are,  
The earth is enough and the air is enough  
For our wonder and our war;  
But our rest is as far as the fire-drake swings,  
And our peace is put in impossible things  
Where clashed and thundered unthinkable wings  
Round an incredible star.

To an open house in the evening  
Home shall men come,  
To an older place than Eden  
And a taller town than Rome;  
To the end of the way of the wandering star,  
To the things that cannot be and that are,  
To the place where God was homeless  
And all men are at home.

*G. K. Chesterton*

*THE HEROIC HEART*



# THE HEROIC HEART

## OPPORTUNITY

This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream: —  
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;  
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged  
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords  
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner  
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.  
A craven hung above the battle's edge,  
And thought, "Had I a sword of keener steel —  
That blue blade that the king's son bears, — but this  
Blunt thing — ! " he snapt and flung it from his hand,  
And lowering crept away and left the field.  
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,  
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,  
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,  
And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout  
Lifted afresh he hewed his enemy down,  
And saved a great cause that heroic day.

*Edward Rowland Sill*

## COLUMBUS<sup>1</sup>

Behind him lay the grey Azores,  
Behind the Gates of Hercules;  
Before him not the ghost of shores,  
Before him only shoreless seas.  
The good mate said: "Now must we pray,  
For lo! the very stars are gone.  
Brave Admiral, speak, what shall I say?"  
"Why, say 'Sail on! sail on! and on!'"

<sup>1</sup> Permission to use granted by the Harr Wagner Publishing Company, publishers of Joaquin Miller's Complete Works.



## THIS SINGING WORLD

"My men grow mutinous day by day;  
My men grow ghastly wan and weak."  
The stout mate thought of home; a spray  
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.  
"What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,  
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"  
"Why, you shall say at break of day,  
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'"

They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,  
Until at last the blanched mate said,  
"Why, now not even God would know  
Should I and all my men fall dead.  
These very winds forget their way,  
For God from these dread seas is gone.  
Now speak, brave Admiral, speak and say"—  
He said: "Sail on! sail on! and on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:  
"This mad sea shows his teeth to-night.  
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,  
With lifted teeth, as if to bite!  
Brave Admiral, say but one good word:  
What shall we do when hope is gone?"  
The words leapt like a leaping sword:  
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then, pale and worn, he kept his deck,  
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night  
Of all dark nights! And then a speck—  
A light! a light! a light! a light!  
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!  
It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.

## THE HEROIC HEART

He gained a world; he gave that world  
Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!"

*Joaquin Miller*

### INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

#### I

You know we French stormed Ratisbon;  
A mile or so away  
On a little mound, Napoleon  
Stood on our storming-day;  
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,  
Legs wide, arms locked behind,  
As if to balance the prone brow  
Oppressive with its mind.

#### II

Just as perhaps he mused, "My plans  
That soar, to earth may fall,  
Let once my army-leader, Lannes,  
Waver at yonder wall," —  
Out 'twixt the battery smokes there flew  
A rider, bound on bound,  
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew  
Until he reached the mound.

#### III

Then off there flung in smiling joy,  
And held himself erect  
By just his horse's mane, a boy:  
You hardly could suspect —  
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,  
Scarce any blood came through)

## THIS SINGING WORLD

You looked twice ere you saw his breast  
Was all but shot in two.

### IV

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace,  
We've got you Ratisbon!  
The Marshal's in the market-place,  
And you'll be there anon  
To see your flag-bird flap his vans  
Where I, to heart's desire,  
Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed: his plans  
Soared up again like fire.

### V

The chief's eye flashed; but presently  
Softened itself, as sheathes  
A film the mother-eagle's eye  
When her bruised eaglet breathes:  
"You're wounded!" — "Nay," the soldier's pride  
Touched to the quick, he said,  
"I'm killed, Sire!" And his chief beside,  
Smiling, the boy fell dead.

*Robert Browning*

## ON A POET PATRIOT

His songs were a little phrase  
Of eternal song,  
Drowned in the harping of lays  
More loud and long.

His deed was a single word,  
Called out alone  
In a night when no echo stirred  
To laughter or moan.





## THE HEROIC HEART

But his songs new souls shall thrill,  
The loud harps dumb,  
And his deed the echoes fill  
When the dawn is come.

*Thomas MacDonagh*

### CLIMB

My shoes fall on the house-top that is so far beneath me,  
I have hung my hat forever on the sharp church spire,  
Now what shall seem the hill but a moment of surmount-  
ing,  
The height but a place to dream of something higher!

Wings? Oh not for me, I need no other pinions  
Than the beating of my heart within my breast;  
Wings are for the dreamer with a bird-like longing,  
Whose dreams come home at eventide to nest.

The timid folk beseech me, the wise ones warn me,  
They say that I shall never grow to stand so high;  
But I climb among the hills of cloud and follow vanished  
lightning,  
I shall stand knee-deep in thunder with my head  
against the sky.

Tiptoe, at last, upon a pinnacle of sunset,  
I shall greet the death-like evening with laughter from  
afar;  
Nor tremble in the darkness nor shun the windy mid-  
night,  
For by the evening I shall be a star.

*Winifred Welles*

## THIS SINGING WORLD

### MEASURE ME, SKY!

Measure me, sky!

Tell me I reach by a song  
Nearer the stars;  
I have been little so long.

Weigh me, high wind!

What will your wild scales record?  
Profit of pain,  
Joy by the weight of a word.

Horizon, reach out!

Catch at my hands, stretch me taut,  
Rim of the world:  
Widen my eyes by a thought.

Sky, be my depth,

Wind, be my width and my height,  
World, my heart's span;  
Loneliness, wings for my flight!

*Leonora Speyer*

### THE TRUMPET

Rise up, rise up,  
And, as the trumpet blowing  
Chases the dreams of men,  
As the dawn glowing  
The stars that left unlit  
The land and water,  
Rise up and scatter  
The dew that covers

## THE HEROIC HEART

The print of last nights' lovers —  
Scatter it, scatter it!

While you are listening  
To the clear horn,  
Forget, men, everything  
On this earth newborn,  
Except that it is lovelier  
Than any mysteries.  
Open your eyes to the air  
That has washed the eyes of the stars  
Through all the dewy night:  
Up with the light,  
To the old wars;  
Arise, arise!

*Edward Thomas*

## FOR THOSE WHO FAIL

"All honor to him who shall win the prize,"  
The world has cried for a thousand years;  
But to him who tries and who fails and dies,  
I give great honor and glory and tears.

O great is the hero who wins a name,  
But greater many and many a time  
Some pale-faced fellow who dies in shame,  
And lets God finish the thought sublime.

O great is the man with a sword undrawn,  
And good is the man who refrains from wine;  
But the man who fails and yet fights on,  
Lo, he is the twin-brother of mine!

*Joaquin Miller*



## THIS SINGING WORLD

### INVICTUS

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever Gods there be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced or cried aloud,  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the horror of the shade;  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishment the scroll —  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.

*W. E. Henley*

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## INDEX OF AUTHORS

ADAMS, LÉONIE		BROWNING, ROBERT	
Homecoming .....	28	Apparitions .....	200
AIKEN, CONRAD		Incident of the French	
Portrait of a Girl ....	187	Camp .....	409
Whim .....	207	Service .....	374
ALLINGHAM, WILLIAM		"Year's at the Spring,	
Fairies, The .....	161	The " .....	3
AMERICAN COWBOY BALLAD		BUNNER, HENRY CUYLER	
Bill Peters .....	116	"One, Two, Three!" ..	92
Whoopee Ti Yi Yo ....	250	BURGESS, GELETT	
ANONYMOUS		Nonsense Rhymes ....	343
Street-Musician, The ..	70	BYNNER, WITTER	
BARHAM, RICHARD HARRIS		Voices .....	321
Jackdaw of Rheims,		CALVERLEY, C. S.	
The .....	282	Ballad .....	326
BATES, KATHERINE LEE		Companions .....	341
Christmas Island .....	398	CARMAN, BLISS	
BEDDOES, THOMAS LOVELL		Daisies .....	64
How Many Times ....	189	Joys of the Road, The	43
BELLOC, HILAIRE		CARROLL, LEWIS	
Foreword, A .....	xxi	Baker's Tale, The ....	333
Frog, The .....	337	Father William .....	118
Henry King .....	313	Snark, The .....	332
Jim .....	272	CARRYL, CHARLES E.	
Lion, The .....	337	Robinson Crusoe's Story	265
Noël .....	391	CARRYL, GUY WETMORE	
Yak, The .....	336	Embarrassing Episode of	
BENÉT, LAURA		Little Miss Muffet,	
Adventure .....	177	The .....	312
Cushy Cow .....	140	Vainglorious Oak and	
BENÉT, WILLIAM ROSE		the Modest Bulrush,	
Horse Thief, The .....	223	The .....	310
How to Catch Unicorns	171	CAWEIN, MADISON	
BOURDILLON, F. W.		"I Hear the Woodlands	
Light .....	193	Calling" .....	54
BROOKE, RUPERT		CHESTERTON, G. K.	
Song .....	186	House of Christmas, The	403

# INDEX OF AUTHORS

CLARKE, FRANCES		DE LA MARE, WALTER	
Who Calis? .....	11	Lost Shoe, The .....	261
COFFIN, ROBERT P. TRISTRAM		Miss T .....	115
Ship O'Bed, The .....	357	Nod .....	362
COLERIDGE, SARA		Summer Evening .....	24
Garden Year, The .....	29	Suppose .....	165
COLUM, PADRAIC		Tired Tim .....	104
Interior .....	80	DEUTSCH, BABETTE	
CONKLING, HILDA		Capriccio .....	208
Chickadee .....	144	"D., H."	
Dandelion .....	63	Heat .....	17
Red Rooster .....	155	Oread .....	38
Spring Song .....	5	Storm .....	18
CORNFORD, FRANCES		DICKINSON, EMILY	
At Night .....	151	Autumn .....	28
Recollection, A .....	102	Pedigree .....	62
Wasted Day, A .....	70	Simplicity .....	61
CURRAN, EDWIN		Storm, The .....	19
Autumn .....	27	DOBSON, AUSTIN	
First Frost .....	20	Cap That Fits, The ..	304
DALMON, CHARLES		In After Days .....	367
Ballad of the Epiphany	395	DUNBAR, PAUL LAURENCE	
Caterpillar's Apology for		Lullaby .....	352
Eating a Favorite		Song of Summer .....	23
Gladiolus, A .....	140	EMERSON, RALPH WALDO	
Cow at Sullington, A	140	Fable .....	319
Legend of Cherries, A	228	FARJEON, ELEANOR	
Three Pictures .....	203	Night Will Never Stay,	
DALY, T. A.		The .....	188
Da Pup Een Da Snow	152	FARRAR, JOHN	
Leetla Giorgio Washeen-		Ambitious Mouse, The	151
ton .....	314	Comparison, A .....	211
Leetla Giuesppina ....	107	FIELD, EUGENE	
DAVIES, W. H.		Dinkey-Bird, The .....	214
Example, The .....	375	Little Peach, The .....	264
Happy Wind .....	375	Wynken, Blynken, and	
Kingfisher, The .....	143	Nod .....	351
Leisure .....	382	FLETCHER, JOHN GOULD	
Nature's Friend .....	16	Enduring, The .....	379
Thunderstorms .....	382	Road, The .....	57
DEANE, ANTHONY C.		To the Winter Wind ..	50
Ballad of the Billycock,		FREEMAN, JOHN	
The .....	267	Wakers, The .....	10

# INDEX OF AUTHORS

<b>FROST, ROBERT</b>		<b>HAY, JOHN</b>	
Brook in the City, A .	87	Enchanted Shirt, The ..	301
Hillside Thaw, A .....	199	Little Breeches .....	219
Pasture, The .....	61	<b>HELBURN, THERESA</b>	
Runaway, The .....	137	Mother .....	120
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening .....	86	<b>HENLEY, W. E.</b>	
Tuft of Flowers, The	383	Ballade of Spring .....	3
<b>FYLEMAN, ROSE</b>		Blackbird, The .....	142
Fairies, The .....	163	Invictus .....	416
Fairy-Music .....	164	"Over the Hills and Far Away" .....	53
<b>GALE, NORMAN</b>		<b>HERFORD, OLIVER</b>	
Dawn and Dark .....	3	Elf and the Dormouse, The .....	172
<b>GARLAND, HAMLIN</b>		Milk Jug, The .....	290
Do You Fear the Wind?	53	<b>HODGSON, RALPH</b>	
<b>GILBERT, W. S.</b>		Song of Honour, The	367
Darned Mounseer, The	280	<b>HOLMES, DANIEL HENRY</b>	
Ellen McJones Aberdeen	277	Willy Winkie .....	244
Yarn of the "Nancy Bell," The .....	273	<b>HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL</b>	
<b>GORE-BOOTH, EVA</b>		Last Leaf, The .....	122
Waves of Breffny, The	77	<b>HOOD, THOMAS</b>	
<b>GORMAN, HERBERT S.</b>		Faithless Nelly Gray ..	287
Satyrs and the Moon, The .....	168	<b>HOUSMAN, A. E.</b>	
<b>GOULD, GERALD</b>		Long Road, The .....	45
Wander-Thirst .....	51	Loveliest of Trees ....	62
<b>GRAVES, ROBERT</b>		<b>HOVEY, RICHARD</b>	
Caterpillar, The .....	141	Mocking-Bird, The ....	142
Cruel Moon, The .....	286	Sea Gypsy, The .....	33
I'd Love to be a Fairy's Child .....	164	<b>HUGHAN, JESSIE WALLACE</b>	
I Wonder What it Feels Like to be Drowned	216	Where the Wood-Thrush Calls .....	83
<b>HALL, CAROLYN</b>		<b>JOHNSON, BURGESS</b>	
Child Upon the Stair, A	98	Glad Young Chamois, The .....	338
Fireflies .....	146	<b>JOYCE, JAMES</b>	
<b>HARDY, THOMAS</b>		Noise of Waters, The	36
Oxen, The .....	392	<b>KEMP, HARRY</b>	
<b>HARRIS, JOEL CHANDLER</b>		Phantasy of Heaven, A	209
De Appile Tree .....	291	<b>KILMER, ALINE</b>	
How Brer Tarrypin Learned to Fly .....	316	Song Against Children ..	287
		<b>KILMER, JOYCE</b>	
		In Fairyland .....	165



# INDEX OF AUTHORS

Theology .....	204	LOWELL, AMY	
KINGSLEY, CHARLES		Dolphins in Blue Water	149
Sands of Dee, The ...	247	Sea Shell .....	211
Young and Old .....	359	LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL	
KIPLING, RUDYARD		Fourth of July Ode ....	373
Ballad of East and West,		McKAY, CLAUDE	
The .....	231	Homing Swallows ....	145
Danny Deever .....	221	Moon Song .....	69
If — .....	377	MACDONAGH, THOMAS	
Recessional .....	385	On a Poet Patriot ....	410
KREYMBORG, ALFRED		Wishes for My Son ..	380
Bloom .....	208	MARKHAM, EDWIN	
Idealists .....	320	Duty .....	386
Tree, The .....	320	Prayer, A .....	386
LAMPSON, FREDERICK LOCKER		Two Taverns .....	356
Unrealized Ideal, The ..	68	MARQUIS, DON	
LANG, ANDREW		Hero Cockroach, The	268
Ballade of Blue China	212	MASEFIELD, JOHN	
LEAR, EDWARD		Ballad of John Silver,	
Nonsense Limericks ..	344	A .....	237
Owl and the Pussy-Cat,		Tewkesbury Road ....	78
The .....	329	Wanderer's Song, A ....	33
LEDWIDGE, FRANCIS		West Wind, The .....	49
Shadow People, The ..	167	MEYNELL, ALICE	
To a Sparrow .....	145	Chimes .....	206
LEIGH, HENRY S.		Shepherdess, The .....	121
Twins, The .....	263	MILLAY, EDNA ST. VINCENT	
LETTS, W. M.		Afternoon on a Hill ..	55
Kerry Cow, The .....	138	God's World .....	15
LEWIS, MICHAEL		Hungry Heart, The ....	65
April Winds .....	6	Portrait by a Neighbor	124
Medley, A .....	340	MILLER, JOAQUIN	
Moon-Children .....	99	Columbus .....	407
LINDSAY, VACHEL		For Those Who Fail ..	415
Four Moon Poems ....	197	MONKHOUSE, COSMO	
Grasshopper, The .....	154	Three Famous Limericks	345
In Praise of Johnny		MONRO, HAROLD	
Appleseed .....	125	Cat's Meat .....	150
I Want to go Wandering	51	Solitude .....	213
LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH		MORLEY, CHRISTOPHER	
Children's Hour, The	95	Song For a Little House	66
Slave's Dream, The ...	243	MORTON, DAVID	
		Old Ships .....	36

# INDEX OF AUTHORS

NATHAN, ROBERT		Boats Sail on the Rivers	17
At the Symphony ....	193	Minnie, Mattie and May	106
Bells in the Country ..	67	Up-Hill .....	362
Daughter at Evening, A	99	Who Has Seen the	
NEWBOLT, HENRY		Wind? .....	17
Drake's Drum .....	222	ROSSETTI, DANTE GABRIEL	
NICHOLL, LOUISE TOWNSEND		Blessed Damozel, The	238
Choir Boys on Christmas		SANDBURG, CARL	
Eve .....	402	Baby Toes .....	103
NOYES, ALFRED		Evening Waterfall .....	26
Apes and Ivory .....	204	Fog .....	26
Highwayman, The ....	253	Harvest Sunset .....	25
OPPENHEIM, JAMES		Helga .....	103
Saturday Night .... .	71	Night Stuff .....	25
O'SHAUGHNESSY, ARTHUR		Primer Lesson .....	378
Ode .....	181	SASSOON, SIEGFRIED	
POE, EDGAR ALLAN		Tree and Sky .....	379
Israfil .....	200	SAXE, JOHN GODFREY	
To Helen .....	182	Blind Men and the Ele-	
RANDS, WILLIAM BRIGHTY		phant, The .....	308
Godfrey Gordon Gusta-		SHARP, WILLIAM	
vus Gore .....	105	Sleep .....	355
Lilliput Levee .....	293	Wasp, The .....	146
Topsy-Turvy World ..	325	SHERMAN, FRANK DEMPSTER	
REESE, LIZETTE WOODWORTH		Daisies .....	64
Bible Stories .....	94	SILL, EDWARD ROWLAND	
Christmas Folk-Song, A	401	Opportunity .....	407
Street Scene, A .....	79	SITWELL, EDITH	
Sunrise .....	9	Old Nurse's Song, The	262
RILEY, JAMES WHITCOMB		Variations on an Old	
Little Orphant Annie ..	173	Nursery Rhyme .....	207
ROBERTS, ELIZABETH MADOX		SORLEY, CHARLES HAMILTON	
Christmas Morning ....	397	Song of the Ungirt Run-	
Hens, The .....	156	ners, The .....	46
Mr. Wells .....	116	SPEYER, LEONORA	
Mumps .....	101	Measure Me, Sky! ....	414
Rabbit, The .....	137	STEPHENS, JAMES	
ROBINSON, EDWIN ARLINGTON		Hate .....	378
Ballade of a Ship .....	37	Seumas Beg .....	115
For Arvia .....	104	STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS	
House on the Hill, The	79	Escape at Bedtime ....	68
ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA GEORGIANA		Hayloft, The .....	84
Birthday, A .....	182	Keepsake Mill .....	85

# INDEX OF AUTHORS

Land of Story-Books,		Fantasy .....	202
The .....	100	From "Swimmers" ...	35
Requiem .....	361	Prayer For This House	67
SWINBURNE, A. C.		Ten Years Old .....	109
Baby's Eyes, A .....	91	Young Mystic, The ....	100
Baby's Feet, A .....	91	WATSON, WILLIAM	
Sea, The .....	34	Song .....	9
SYNGE, J. M.		WELLES, WINIFRED	
Prelude .....	15	Climb .....	413
TAYLOR, BERT LESTON		Tree at Dusk, A .....	206
Road to Anywhere, The	56	WELLS, CAROLYN	
TEASDALE, SARA		Four Tricky Limericks	346
April .....	6	How to Tell the Wild	
Full Moon .....	86	Animals .....	335
To Dick, On His Sixth		WHEELLOCK, JOHN HALL	
Birthday .....	108	For Them All .....	190
TENNYSON, ALFRED		Nirvana .....	191
Blow, Bugle, Blow ....	189	Sunday Evening in the	
Crossing the Bar .....	359	Common .....	73
Mermaid, The .....	175	WHITELY, OPAL	
Sweet and Low .....	353	Words, The .....	191
THACKERAY, WILLIAM MAKE- PEACE		WHITMAN, WALT	
Little Billee .....	330	Commonplace, The ....	73
THOMAS, EDWARD		First Dandelion, The ..	62
Trumpet, The .....	414	Give Me the Splendid	
THOMPSON, FRANCIS		Silent Sun .....	387
Child's Prayer, A .....	96	"I am He That Walks"	30
To a Snowflake .....	65	O Captain! My Cap- tain! .....	360
TURNER, NANCY BYRD		Runner, The .....	124
Contrary Mary .....	339	What is the Grass? ....	102
Words .....	338	WICKHAM, ANNA	
TYNAN, KATHERINE		Cherry-Blossom Wand, The .....	185
Chanticleer .....	154	Singer, The .....	194
Desire, The .....	93	WIDDEMER, MARGARET	
UNTERMEYER, JEAN STARR		Sea Call .....	38
From the Day-Book of a Forgotten Prince ..	229	Watcher, The .....	120
Glimpse in Autumn ..	27	WOLFE, HUMBERT	
High-Tide .....	39	Blackbird, The .....	143
Old Nurse Winter .....	356	Old Lady, The .....	121
UNTERMEYER, LOUIS		Tulip .....	63
Dick Said: .....	210		

## INDEX OF AUTHORS

WYLIE, ELINOR		Father Gilligan .....	251
Eagle and the Mole, The	376	Lake Isle of Innisfree,	
Puritan's Ballad, The ..	248	The .....	77
Velvet Shoes .....	19	Song .....	186
YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER		YOUNG, E. HILTON	
Cradle Song, A .....	354	Christmas .....	402

## INDEX OF TITLES

Adventure .....	<i>Laura Benét</i>	177
Afternoon on a Hill .....	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i>	55
Ambitious Mouse, The .....	<i>John Farrar</i>	151
Apes and Ivory .....	<i>Alfred Noyes</i>	204
Apparitions .....	<i>Robert Browning</i>	200
April .....	<i>Sara Teasdale</i>	6
April Winds .....	<i>Michael Lewis</i>	6
At Night .....	<i>Francis Cornford</i>	151
At the Symphony .....	<i>Robert Nathan</i>	193
Autumn .....	<i>Edwin Curran</i>	27
Autumn .....	<i>Emily Dickinson</i>	28
Baby's Eyes, A .....	<i>A. C. Swinburne</i>	91
Baby's Feet, A .....	<i>A. C. Swinburne</i>	91
Baby Toes .....	<i>Carl Sandburg</i>	103
Baker's Tale, The .....	<i>Lewis Carroll</i>	333
Ballad .....	<i>C. S. Calverley</i>	326
Ballad of the Billycock, The .....	<i>Anthony C. Deane</i>	267
Ballad of East and West, The .....	<i>Rudyard Kipling</i>	231
Ballad of the Epiphany .....	<i>Charles Dalmon</i>	395
Ballad of John Silver, A .....	<i>John Masefield</i>	237
Ballade of Blue China .....	<i>Andrew Lang</i>	212
Ballade of a Ship .....	<i>Edwin Arlington Robinson</i>	37
Ballade of Spring .....	<i>W. E. Henley</i>	3
Bells in the Country .....	<i>Robert Nathan</i>	67
Bible Stories .....	<i>Lizette Woodworth Reese</i>	94
Bill Peters .....	<i>American Cowboy Ballad</i>	116
Birthday, A .....	<i>Christina Georgiana Rossetti</i>	182
Blackbird, The .....	<i>W. E. Henley</i>	142
Blackbird, The .....	<i>Humbert Wolfe</i>	143
Blessed Damozel, The .....	<i>Dante Gabriel Rossetti</i>	238
Blind Men and the Elephant, The .....	<i>John Godfrey Saxe</i>	308
Bloom .....	<i>Alfred Kreymborg</i>	208
Blow, Bugle, Blow .....	<i>Alfred Tennyson</i>	189
Boats Sail on the Rivers .....	<i>Christina Georgiana Rossetti</i>	17
Brook in the City, A .....	<i>Robert Frost</i>	87
Capriccio .....	<i>Babette Deutsch</i>	208
Cap That Fits, The .....	<i>Austin Dobson</i>	304

# INDEX OF TITLES

Caterpillar, The .....	<i>Robert Graves</i>	141
Caterpillar's Apology for Eating a Favorite Gladiolus, A .....	<i>Charles Dalmon</i>	140
Cat's Meat .....	<i>Harold Monro</i>	150
Chanticleer .....	<i>Katherine Tynan</i>	154
Cherry-Blossom Wand, The .....	<i>Anna Wickham</i>	185
Chickadee .....	<i>Hilda Conkling</i>	144
Children's Hour, The .....	<i>Henry Wadsworth Longfellow</i>	95
Child's Prayer, A .....	<i>Francis Thompson</i>	96
Child Upon the Stair, A .....	<i>Carolyn Hall</i>	98
Chimes .....	<i>Alice Meynell</i>	206
Choir Boys on Christmas Eve .....	<i>Louise Townsend Nicholl</i>	402
Christmas .....	<i>E. Hilton Young</i>	402
Christmas Folk-Song, A .....	<i>Lizette Woodworth Reese</i>	401
Christmas Island .....	<i>Katherine Lee Bates</i>	398
Christmas Morning .....	<i>Elizabeth Madox Roberts</i>	397
Climb .....	<i>Winifred Welles</i>	413
Columbus .....	<i>Joaquin Miller</i>	407
Commonplace, The .....	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	73
Companions .....	<i>C. S. Calverley</i>	341
Comparison, A .....	<i>John Farrar</i>	211
Contrary Mary .....	<i>Nancy Byrd Turner</i>	339
Cow at Sullington, A .....	<i>Charles Dalmon</i>	140
Cradle Song, A .....	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	354
Crossing the Bar .....	<i>Alfred Tennyson</i>	359
Cruel Moon, The .....	<i>Robert Graves</i>	286
Cushy Cow .....	<i>Laura Benét</i>	140
Daisies .....	<i>Bliss Carman</i>	64
Daisies .....	<i>Frank D. Sherman</i>	64
Dandelion .....	<i>Hilda Conkling</i>	63
Danny Deever .....	<i>Rudyard Kipling</i>	221
Da Pup Een Da Snow .....	<i>T. A. Daly</i>	152
Darned Mounseer, The .....	<i>W. S. Gilbert</i>	280
Daughter at Evening, The .....	<i>Robert Nathan</i>	99
Dawn and Dark .....	<i>Norman Gale</i>	3
De Appile Tree .....	<i>Joel Chandler Harris</i>	291
Desire, The .....	<i>Katherine Tynan</i>	93
Dick Said: .....	<i>Louis Untermeyer</i>	210
Dinkey-Bird, The .....	<i>Eugene Field</i>	214
Dolphins in Blue Water .....	<i>Amy Lowell</i>	149
Do you Fear the Wind? .....	<i>Hamlin Garland</i>	53
Drake's Drum .....	<i>Henry Newbolt</i>	222
Duty .....	<i>Edwin Markham</i>	386

# INDEX OF TITLES

Eagle and the Mole, The .....	<i>Elinor Wylie</i>	376
Elf and the Dormouse, The .....	<i>Oliver Herford</i>	172
Ellen McJones Aberdeen .....	<i>W. S. Gilbert</i>	277
Embarrassing Episode of Little Miss Muffet, The	<i>Guy Wetmore Carryl</i>	312
Enchanted Shirt, The .....	<i>John Hay</i>	301
Enduring, The .....	<i>John Gould Fletcher</i>	379
Escape at Bedtime .....	<i>Robert Louis Stevenson</i>	68
Evening Waterfall .....	<i>Carl Sandburg</i>	26
Example, The .....	<i>W. H. Davies</i>	375
Fable .....	<i>Ralph Waldo Emerson</i>	319
Fairies, The .....	<i>William Allingham</i>	161
Fairies, The .....	<i>Rose Fyleman</i>	163
Fairy-Music .....	<i>Rose Fyleman</i>	164
Faithless Nelly Gray .....	<i>Thomas Hood</i>	287
Fantasy .....	<i>Louis Untermeyer</i>	202
Father Gilligan .....	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	251
Father William .....	<i>Lewis Carroll</i>	118
Fireflies .....	<i>Carolyn Hall</i>	146
First Dandelion, The .....	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	62
First Frost .....	<i>Edwin Curran</i>	20
Fog .....	<i>Carl Sandburg</i>	26
For Arvia .....	<i>Edwin Arlington Robinson</i>	104
Foreword, A .....	<i>Hilaire Belloc</i>	xxi
For Them All .....	<i>John Hall Wheelock</i>	190
For Those Who Fail .....	<i>Joaquín Miller</i>	415
Four Moon Poems .....	<i>Vachel Lindsay</i>	197
Fourth of July Ode .....	<i>James Russell Lowell</i>	373
Four Tricky Limericks .....	<i>Carolyn Wells</i>	346
Frog, The .....	<i>Hilaire Belloc</i>	337
From the Day-Book of a Forgotten Prince	<i>Jean Starr Untermeyer</i>	229
From "Swimmers" .....	<i>Louis Untermeyer</i>	35
Full Moon .....	<i>Sara Teasdale</i>	86
Garden Year, The .....	<i>Sara Coleridge</i>	29
Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun .....	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	387
Glad Young Chamois, The .....	<i>Burges Johnson</i>	338
Glimpse in Autumn .....	<i>Jean Starr Untermeyer</i>	27
Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore .....	<i>William Brighty Rand</i>	105
God's World .....	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i>	15
Grasshopper, The .....	<i>Vachel Lindsay</i>	154
Happy Wind .....	<i>W. H. Davies</i>	375
Harvest Sunset .....	<i>Carl Sandburg</i>	25

# INDEX OF TITLES

Hate .....	<i>James Stephens</i>	378
Hayloft, The .....	<i>Robert Louis Stevenson</i>	84
Heat .....	"H. D."	17
Helga .....	<i>Carl Sandburg</i>	103
Henry King .....	<i>Hilaire Belloc</i>	313
Hens, The .....	<i>Elizabeth Madox Roberts</i>	156
Hero Cockroach, The .....	<i>Don Marquis</i>	268
High-Tide .....	<i>Jean Starr Untermeyer</i>	39
Highwayman, The .....	<i>Alfred Noyes</i>	253
Hillside Thaw, A .....	<i>Robert Frost</i>	199
Homecoming .....	<i>Léonie Adams</i>	28
Homing Swallows .....	<i>Claude McKay</i>	145
Horse Thief, The .....	<i>William Rose Benét</i>	223
House of Christmas, The .....	<i>G. K. Chesterton</i>	403
House on the Hill, The .....	<i>Edwin Arlington Robinson</i>	79
How Brer Tarrypin Learned to Fly .....	<i>Joel Chandler Harris</i>	316
How to Catch Unicorns .....	<i>William Rose Benét</i>	171
How Many Times .....	<i>Thomas Lovell Beddoes</i>	189
How to Tell the Wild Animals .....	<i>Carolyn Wells</i>	335
Hungry Heart, The .....	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i>	65
"I Am He That Walks" .....	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	30
Idealists .....	<i>Alfred Kreymborg</i>	320
I'd Love to be a Fairy's Child .....	<i>Robert Graves</i>	164
If — .....	<i>Rudyard Kipling</i>	377
"I Hear the Woodlands Calling" .....	<i>Madison Cawein</i>	54
In After Days .....	<i>Austin Dobson</i>	367
Incident of the French Camp .....	<i>Robert Browning</i>	409
In Fairyland .....	<i>Joyce Kilmer</i>	165
In Praise of Johnny Appleseed .....	<i>Vachel Lindsay</i>	125
Interior .....	<i>Padraic Colum</i>	80
Invictus .....	<i>W. E. Henley</i>	416
Israfel .....	<i>Edgar Allan Poe</i>	200
I Want to go Wandering .....	<i>Vachel Lindsay</i>	51
I Wonder What it Feels Like to be Drowned ...	<i>Robert Graves</i>	216
Jackdaw of Rheims, The .....	<i>Richard Harris Barham</i>	282
Jim .....	<i>Hilaire Belloc</i>	272
Joys of the Road, The .....	<i>Bliss Carman</i>	43
Keepsake Mill .....	<i>Robert Louis Stevenson</i>	85
Kerry Cow, The .....	<i>W. M. Letts</i>	138
Kingfisher, The .....	<i>W. H. Davies</i>	143
Kriss Kringle .....	<i>Thomas Bailey Aldrich</i>	396
Lake Isle of Innisfree, The .....	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	77
Land of Story-Books, The .....	<i>Robert Louis Stevenson</i>	100



# INDEX OF TITLES

Last Leaf, The .....	<i>Oliver Wendell Holmes</i>	122
Leetla Giorgio Washeenton .....	<i>T. A. Daly</i>	314
Leetla Guiseppina .....	<i>T. A. Daly</i>	107
Legend of Cherries, A .....	<i>Charles Dalmon</i>	228
Leisure .....	<i>W. H. Davies</i>	382
Light .....	<i>F. W. Bourdillon</i>	193
Lilliput Levee .....	<i>William Brighty Rand</i>	293
Lion, The .....	<i>Hilaire Belloc</i>	337
Little Billee .....	<i>William Makepeace Thackeray</i>	330
Little Breeches .....	<i>John Hay</i>	219
Little Orphant Annie .....	<i>James Whitcomb Riley</i>	173
Little Peach, The .....	<i>Eugene Field</i>	264
Long Road, The .....	<i>A. E. Housman</i>	45
Lost Shoe, The .....	<i>Walter De la Mare</i>	261
Loveliest of Trees .....	<i>A. E. Housman</i>	62
Lullaby .....	<i>Paul Laurence Dunbar</i>	352
Measure Me, Sky! .....	<i>Leonora Speyer</i>	414
Medley, A .....	<i>Michael Lewis</i>	340
Mermaid, The .....	<i>Alfred Tennyson</i>	175
Milk Jug, The .....	<i>Oliver Herford</i>	290
Minnie, Mattie and May .....	<i>Christina Georgiana Rossetti</i>	106
Miss T .....	<i>Walter De la Mare</i>	115
Mocking-Bird, The .....	<i>Richard Hovey</i>	142
Moon-Children .....	<i>Michael Lewis</i>	99
Moon Song .....	<i>Claude McKay</i>	69
Mother .....	<i>Theresa Helburn</i>	120
Mr. Wells .....	<i>Elizabeth Madox Roberts</i>	116
Mumps .....	<i>Elizabeth Madox Roberts</i>	101
Nature's Friend .....	<i>W. H. Davies</i>	16
Night Stuff .....	<i>Carl Sandburg</i>	25
Night Will Never Stay, The .....	<i>Eleanor Farjeon</i>	188
Nirvana .....	<i>John Hall Wheelock</i>	191
Nod .....	<i>Walter De la Mare</i>	362
Noël .....	<i>Hilaire Belloc</i>	391
Noise of Waters, The .....	<i>James Joyce</i>	36
Nonsense Limericks .....	<i>Edward Lear</i>	344
Nonsense Rhymes .....	<i>Gelett Burgess</i>	343
O Captain! My Captain! .....	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	360
Ode .....	<i>Arthur O'Shaughnessy</i>	181
Old Lady, The .....	<i>Humbert Wolfe</i>	121
Old Nurse's Song, The .....	<i>Edith Sitwell</i>	262
Old Nurse Winter .....	<i>Jean Starr Untermeyer</i>	356
Old Ships .....	<i>David Morton</i>	36

# INDEX OF TITLES

"One, Two, Three!" .....	Henry Cuyler Bunner	92
On a Poet Patriot .....	Thomas MacDonagh	410
Opportunity .....	Edward Rowland Sill	407
Oread .....	"H. D."	38
"Over the Hills and Far Away" .....	W. E. Henley	53
Owl and the Pussy-Cat, The .....	Edward Lear	329
Oxen, The .....	Thomas Hardy	392
Pasture, The .....	Robert Frost	61
Pedigree .....	Emily Dickinson	62
Phantasy of Heaven, A .....	Harry Kemp	209
Portrait of a Girl .....	Conrad Aiken	187
Portrait by a Neighbor .....	Edna St. Vincent Millay	124
Prayer, A .....	Edwin Markham	386
Prayer For This House .....	Louis Untermeyer	67
Prelude .....	J. M. Synge	15
Primer Lesson .....	Carl Sandburg	378
Puritan's Ballad, The .....	Elinor Wylie	248
Rabbit, The .....	Elizabeth Madox Roberts	137
Recessional .....	Rudyard Kipling	385
Recollection, A .....	Frances Cornford	102
Red Rooster .....	Hilda Conkling	155
Requiem .....	Robert Louis Stevenson	361
Road, The .....	John Gould Fletcher	57
Road to Anywhere, The .....	Bert Leston Taylor	56
Robinson Crusoe's Story .....	Charles E. Carryl	265
Runaway, The .....	Robert Frost	137
Runner, The .....	Walt Whitman	124
Sands of Dee, The .....	Charles Kingsley	247
Saturday Night .....	James Oppenheim	71
Satyrs and the Moon, The .....	Herbert S. Gorman	168
Sea, The .....	A. C. Swinburne	34
Sea Call .....	Margaret Widdemer	38
Sea Gypsy, The .....	Richard Hovey	33
Sea Shell .....	Amy Lowell	211
Service .....	Robert Browning	374
Seumas Beg .....	James Stephens	115
Shadow People, The .....	Francis Ledwidge	167
Shepherdess, The .....	Alice Meynell	121
Ship O'Bed, The .....	Robert P. Tristram Coffin	357
Simplicity .....	Emily Dickinson	61
Singer, The .....	Anna Wickham	194
Slave's Dream, The .....	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	243
Sleep .....	William Sharp	355

## *INDEX OF FIRST LINES*

### A

A baby's eyes, ere speech begin .....	91
A baby's feet, like sea-shells pink .....	91
A bird ran up the onyx steps of night .....	202
A Boy was born at Bethlehem .....	402
A bulrush stood on a river's rim .....	310
A canner, exceedingly canny .....	346
A child said What is the grass? fetching it to me with full hands .....	102
A city child, rooms are to him no mere .....	109
Across the places deep and dim .....	56
A lady there was of Antigua .....	346
A little peach in the orchard grew .....	264
All day I hear the noise of waters .....	36
"All honor to him who shall win the prize" .....	415
All service ranks the same with God .....	374
A man was sitting underneath a tree .....	115
Apes and ivory, skulls and roses, in junks of old Hong-Kong ..	204
A poor benighted Hindoo .....	346
Apple blossoms look like snow .....	211
April, April .....	9
A rosy cloud of the dawn I see .....	203
As a friend to the children commend me the Yak .....	336
As I was a-walking one morning for pleasure .....	250
As one who walks in sleep, up a familiar lane .....	57
A sparkling sunset, oranged to gold .....	20
At evening when I go to bed .....	64
At evening when the lamp is lit .....	100
At night through the city in a song .....	190
A tutor who tooted the flute .....	346
Avoid the reeking herd .....	376
A wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels .....	33

### B

Because you have no fear to mingle .....	145
Bedtime's come fu' little boys .....	352

## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

Before her supper where she sits .....	99
Before she has her floor swept .....	124
Behind him lay the grey Azores .....	407
Be kind and tender to the Frog .....	337
Bells in the country .....	67
Ben Battle was a soldier bold .....	287
Beside the ungathered rice he lay .....	243
Between the dark and the daylight .....	95
Beyond the East the sunrise, beyond the West the sea .....	51
Bill Peters was a hustler .....	116
Black wave the trees in the forest .....	177
Boats sail on the rivers .....	17
Brer Tarrypin tired er prom'nadin' roun' .....	316
Brief, on a flying night .....	206
Brother Tree .....	320

### C

Child, do not throw this book about .....	xxi
Children born of fairy stock .....	164
Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock .....	392
Clean as a lady .....	63
"Come, listen, my men, while I tell you again" .....	332
Confuse me not with impious things .....	140
Cushy cow has curly horns .....	140

### D

Dat's a mighty quare tale 'bout de Appile-tree .....	291
Deed you evra see Joy .....	152
Dis is gospel weathah sho' .....	23
Does the road wind up-hill all the way? .....	362
Down by the flash of the restless water .....	37
Do you fear the force of the wind .....	53
Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away .....	222

### F

Fringed with coral, floored with lava .....	398
---	-----

### G

Give me no mansions ivory white .....	93
Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams full-dazzling .....	387

## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore .....	105
God of our fathers, known of old .....	385
God with His million cares .....	3

### H

Hear! hear! hear! .....	142
Helen, thy beauty is to me .....	182
He plays for all the little side-streets, while .....	70
Here's an example from .....	375
Hey! Crackerjack — jump! .....	149
His songs were a little phrase .....	410
Ho, all you cats in all the street .....	150
How happy is the little stone .....	61
How lightly leaps the youthful chamois .....	338
How many times do I love thee, dear? .....	189

### I

I am fevered with the sunset .....	33
I am four monkeys .....	320
I am he that walks with the tender and growing Night .....	30
I climbed a hill as light fell short .....	367
I don't go much on religion .....	219
I'd Rather have Fingers than Toes .....	343
I edged back against the night .....	39
If all the world were candy .....	151
If Bethlehem were here today .....	397
If ever you should go by chance .....	335
If I had peace to sit and sing .....	194
If the autumn ended .....	379
If the butterfly courted the bee .....	325
If you can keep your head when all about you .....	377
I had a feeling in my neck .....	101
I have praised many loved ones in my song .....	120
I hear the woodlands calling, and their red is like the blare ..	54
I know not of what we ponder'd .....	341
I listened, there was not a sound to hear .....	86
I love daffodils .....	5
I'm glad our house is a little house .....	66
I'm going out to clean the pasture spring .....	61
In after days when grasses high .....	367
In an ocean, 'way out yonder .....	214

## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

In Autumn tomboy winds begin to throw .....	356
I never saw a Purple Cow .....	344
In form and feature, face and limb .....	263
In Heaven a spirit doth dwell .....	200
In Spring the day is early .....	6
In the days of President Washington .....	125
In the far corner .....	143
I remember how I lay .....	356
I saw him once before .....	122
I see them on my trellises and walls .....	203
I shall have pearls blacker than caviar .....	208
I shipped, d'ye see, in a Revenue sloop .....	280
I spoiled the day .....	70
It is good to be out on the road, and going one knows not where .....	78
It is, indeed, a pleasant thing to know .....	203
It's a very odd thing .....	115
It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries .....	49
Its cloven hoofprint on the sand .....	171
It's in Connacht in Munster that yourself might travel wide .....	138
It was an old, old, old, old lady .....	92
It was six men of Indostan .....	308
It was the good ship <i>Billycock</i> , with thirteen men aboard ..	267
It was the Rainbow gave thee birth .....	143
I want to go wandering. Who shall declare .....	51
I went to turn the grass once after one .....	383
I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree .....	77
I will be the gladdest thing .....	55
I will go back to the great sweet mother .....	34
I will pluck from my tree a cherry-blossom wand .....	185
I Wish that my Room had a Floor! .....	343

### J

January brings the snow .....	29
Joe Baratta's Guiseppina .....	107
Just as the moon was fading amid her misty rings .....	396

### L

Ladies at a ball .....	27
Let my soul, a shining star .....	379
Let us walk in the white snow .....	19
Listen a while, the moon is a lovely woman .....	25

## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

"Listen, children, listen, won't you come into the night?"	11
Little Jack Horner sat in the corner .....	340
Little Jesus, wast Thou shy .....	96
Little lamps of the dusk .....	146
Little Miss Muffet discovered a tuffet .....	312
Little Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay .....	173
Little Words that wear silk dresses .....	191
Look at my knees .....	216
Look—on the topmost branches of the world .....	73
Look out how you use proud words .....	378
Loveliest of trees, the cherry now .....	62

### M

Macphairson Clonglocketty Angus McClan .....	277
May nothing evil cross this door .....	67
Measure me, sky! .....	414
Minnie and Mattie .....	106
My enemy came nigh .....	378
My father is happy or we should be poor .....	229
My father's friend came once to tea .....	102
My heart, being hungry, feeds on food .....	65
My heart is like a singing bird .....	182
My love came up from Barnegat .....	248
My mind has thunderstorms .....	382
My old love for the water has come back again .....	38
My only Love is always near .....	68
My shoes fall on the house-top that is so far beneath me ...	413

### N

Not young, I think .....	304
Now, my son, is life for you .....	380
Now, speech is very curious .....	338
Now St. Joseph's cottage stood .....	228
Now the joys of the road are chiefly these .....	43
Now when I stand upon the stair alone .....	98

### O

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done .....	360
Of all the birds from East to West .....	154
Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet .....	231

## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

Oh, happy wind, how sweet .....	375
"Oh! Love," they said, "is King of Kings" .....	186
Oh, the swift plunge into the cool green dark .....	35
Old Euclid drew a circle .....	197
Old lame Bridget doesn't hear .....	167
O Little Soldier with the golden helmet .....	63
O Mary, go and call the cattle home .....	247
On a flat road runs the well-train'd runner .....	124
On a winter's night long time ago .....	391
Once, when the snow of the year was beginning to fall .....	137
On moony nights the dogs bark shrill .....	151
On Sunday morning, then he comes .....	116
O the barberry bright, the barberry bright .....	287
O, there were lights and laughter .....	321
Our fathers fought for Liberty .....	373
Out of the night that covers me .....	416
Over the borders, a sin without pardon .....	85
Over the shoulders and slopes of the dune .....	64
O wind, rend open the heat .....	17
O World, I cannot hold thee close enough! .....	15

### P

Perhaps he plays with cherubs now .....	209
Poor little Lucy .....	261
Poor tired Tim! It's sad for him .....	104
Ptolemy, poor Ptolemy .....	262

### R

Red gold of pools .....	25
Red rooster in your gray coop .....	155
Rise up, rise up .....	414

### S

Said a bad little youngster named Beauchamp .....	347
Say what you like .....	16
Sea Shell, Sea Shell .....	211
She always leaned to watch for us .....	120
She leaves the puddle where she drinks .....	140
She walks—the lady of my delight .....	121
Simple and fresh and fair from winter's close emerging ...	62
Sleep on, I lie at heaven's high oriel .....	191



## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

Softly along the road of evening .....	362
Somewhere Jack-in-the-pulpit stands .....	83
Still south I went and west and south again .....	15
Such a starved bank of moss .....	200
Sunset and evening star .....	359
Suppose . . . and suppose that a wild little Horse of Magic	165
Sweet and low, sweet and low .....	353
Swift swallows sailing from the Spanish main .....	145

### T

Teach me, Father, how to go .....	386
The angels are stooping .....	354
The auld wife sat at her ivied door .....	326
The blade is sharp, the reaper stout .....	204
The blessed damozel leaned out .....	238
The 'cellos, setting forth apart .....	193
The chickadee in the appletree .....	144
The Chief Defect of Henry King .....	313
The Cockroach stood by the mickle wood in the flush of the astral dawn .....	268
The commonplace I sing .....	73
The cruel Moon hangs out of reach .....	286
The east is a clear violet mass .....	79
The east is yellow as a daffodil .....	9
The fairy poet takes a sheet .....	165
The farm house lingers, though averse to square .....	87
The fog comes .....	26
The Gentle Milk Jug blue and white .....	290
The grand road from the mountain goes shining to the sea ...	77
The Grasshopper, the Grasshopper .....	154
The Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair! .....	282
The joyous morning ran and kissed the grass .....	10
The King of China's daughter .....	207
The King was sick. His cheek was red .....	301
The lights from the parlor and kitchen shone out .....	68
The lights of Saturday night beat golden, golden over the pillared street .....	71
The Lion, the Lion, he dwells in the waste .....	337
The little Jesus came to town .....	401
The little moths are creeping .....	80
The moon? It is a griffin's egg .....	198
The moonlight breaks upon the city's towers .....	69

## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

The moon's a little prairie-dog .....	197
The Moon's the North Wind's Cooky .....	198
The morns are meeker than they were .....	28
The mountain and the squirrel .....	319
The music of the autumn winds sings low .....	27
The night has a thousand eyes .....	193
The nightingale has a lyre of gold .....	142
The night was coming very fast .....	156
The night was thick and hazy .....	265
The night will never stay .....	188
"Then sleep, Thou little Child." Thus, sweet and high ...	402
The old, old lady .....	121
The old priest Peter Gilligan .....	251
The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea .....	329
The pedigree of honey .....	62
There are fairies at the bottom of our garden! .....	163
There came a wind like a bugle .....	19
There fared a mother driven forth .....	403
There he moved, cropping the grass at the purple canyon's lip	223
There is a blue star, Janet .....	103
There is a memory stays upon old ships .....	36
There's a joy without canker or cark .....	212
There's a noise of coming, going .....	3
There was a Boy whose name was Jim .....	272
There was an Old Man in a tree .....	344
There was an Old Man of Cape Horn .....	345
There was an Old Man who said, "How .....	345
There was an Old Man with a beard .....	345
There was a young fellow named Tait .....	347
There was a young lady of Niger .....	345
There was a Young Lady of Norway .....	344
There was a Young Lady whose eyes .....	345
There were three sailors of Bristol city .....	330
The roofs are shining from the rain .....	6
The room was low and small and kind .....	94
The sandy cat by the Farmer's chair .....	24
The splendor falls on castle walls .....	189
The Sun is Low, to Say the Least .....	343
The wind blows out of the gates of the day .....	186
The Window has Four Little Panes .....	344
The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees	253
The wishes on this child's mouth .....	103
They are all gone away .....	79

## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

The year's at the spring .....	3
They roused him with muffins—they roused him with ice .....	333
This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream .....	407
This is the shape of the leaf, and this of the flower .....	187
Tho' I am very old and wise .....	108
Through all the pleasant meadowside .....	84
To think to know the country and not know .....	199
'Twas on the shores that round our coast .....	273

### U

Under a toadstool .....	172
Under the wide and starry sky .....	361
Under this loop of honeysuckle .....	141
Up the airy mountain .....	161

### W

We are the music-makers .....	181
Wee Willy Winkie .....	244
Well, Heaven's hard to understand .....	210
We sat together close and warm .....	100
We swing ungirded hips .....	46
We were schooner-rigged and rakish, with a long and lissome hull .....	237
"What are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade ..	221
What heart could have thought you? .....	65
What is this life if, full of care .....	382
What was the name you called me? .....	26
When all the world is young, lad .....	359
When Christ was born in Bethlehem .....	395
When Duty comes a-knocking at your gate .....	386
When fiddlers play their tunes, you may sometimes hear ....	164
When flowers thrust their head above the ground .....	208
When I stepped homeward to my hill .....	28
When I was young, I had a bed .....	357
When the ripe pears droop heavily .....	146
When trout swim down Great Ormond Street .....	207
When with fingers all uncertain, tiny stars have torn the curtain .....	99
When you have tidied all the things for the night .....	213
Where does Pinafore Palace stand? .....	293
Where forlorn sunsets flare and fade .....	53
While sways the restless sea .....	355

## INDEX OF FIRST LINES

Whirl up, sea .....	38
White in the moon the long road lies .....	45
Who has seen the wind? .....	17
Whose woods these are I think I know .....	86
Who would be a mermaid fair .....	175
Wind of the winter, drive the ships home .....	50
Within the wood behind the hill .....	168
With secrets in their eyes the blue-winged Hours .....	206
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night .....	351

### Y

"You are old, Father William," the young man said .....	118
You ask why Mary was called contrary .....	339
You crash over the trees .....	18
You Eyes, you large and all-inquiring Eyes .....	104
You know w'at for ees school keep out .....	314
You know we French stormed Ratisbon .....	409





















129 464

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